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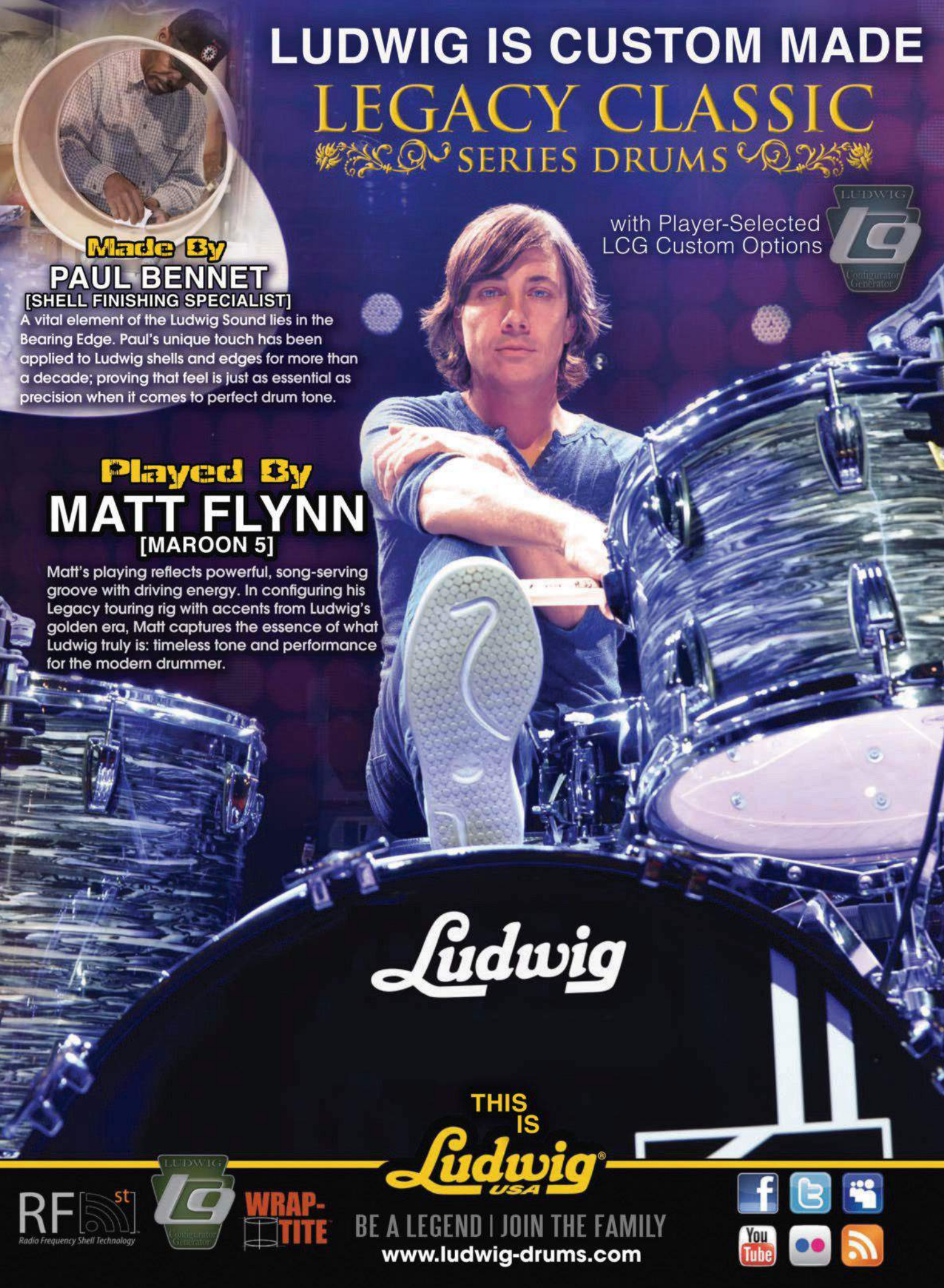
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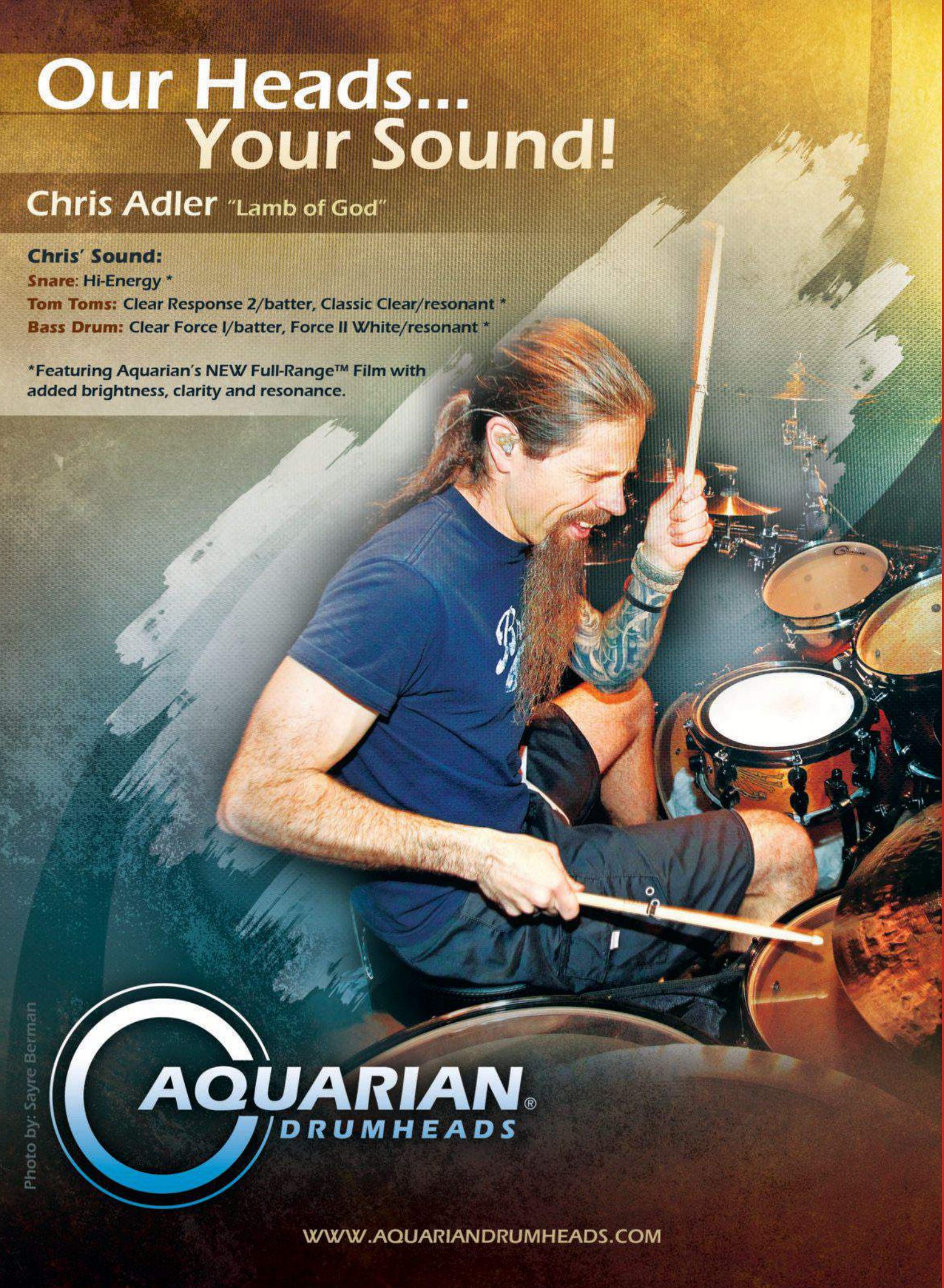

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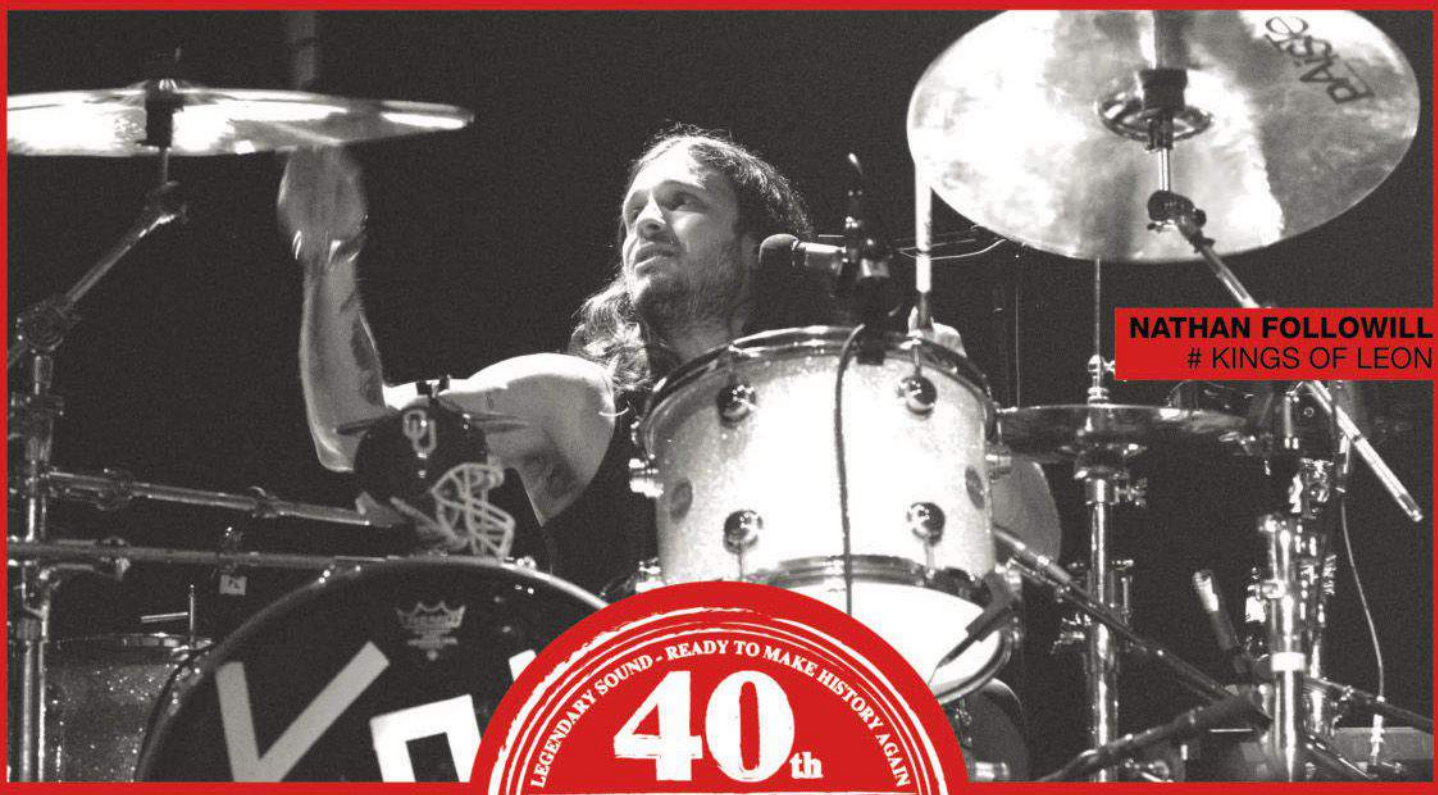

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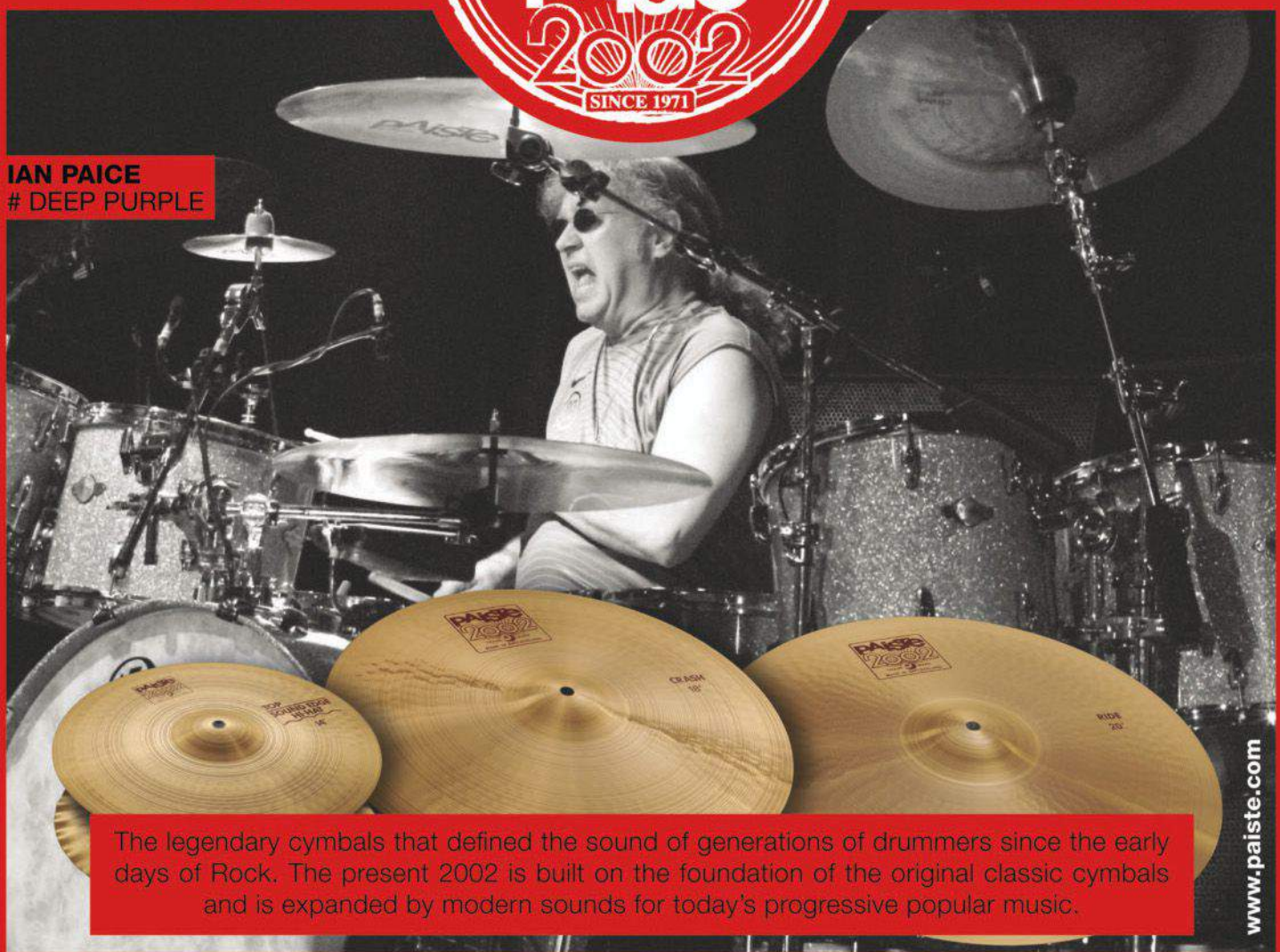

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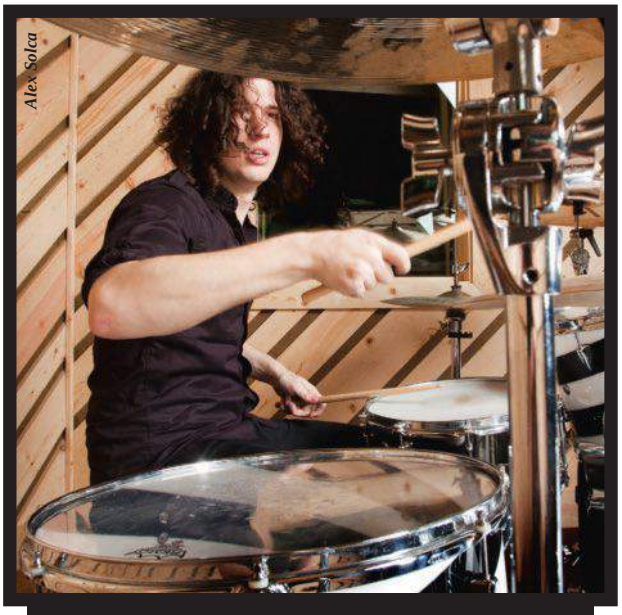
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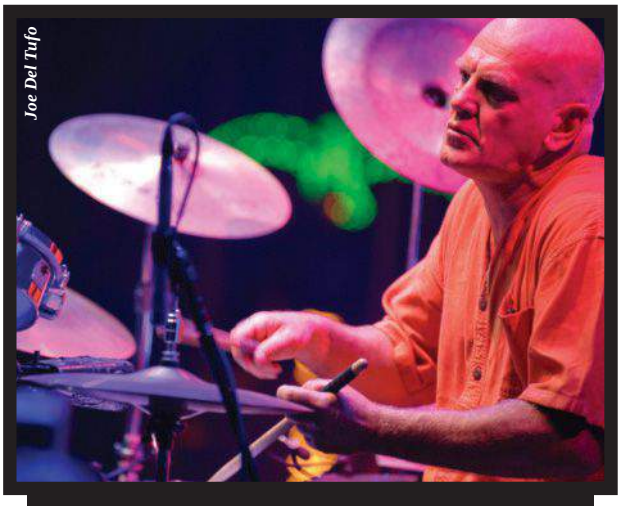
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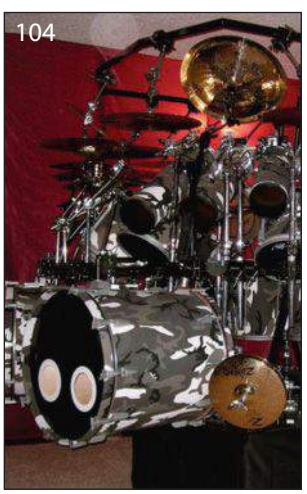

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Groovy

There's a lot about this drumming business that we can think of in concrete terms. A single-stroke roll is a single-stroke roll: RLRLRLRL. Yes, when you hear someone like Eric Harland play one that's so fast, so smooth, so tight, you might think that true mastery will never be within reach. But singles are still singles, and you're playing them each time you sit down at the drums, even if yours don't resemble Harland's. (That's okay—they're *yours*.) RLRLRLRL…

Then there are fuzzier—but equally important—concepts, like groove and vibe. What exactly *is* groove? To a lot of people it's one of those "I'm not quite sure, but I know it when I hear it" types of things. It's tempting to place the idea of groove in the realm of funk music, because funk definitely grooves, right? Right! But the idea of groove goes way beyond funk. Does "Waiting Room" by Fugazi groove? Does "Bleed" by Meshuggah? You bet they do.

My definition of groove, in a musical context, boils down to making a piece connect with the listener on a bodily level—it's what makes the toes tap and the head bob (or bang). Various styles of music enter the ears in different ways and cause different reactions, but all types of music can groove. As a drummer who fell in love with rock 'n' roll first, I'm a "nodder," meaning that when I respond to the rhythms of a piece of music, I tend to nod my head up and down. I'm not sure where I learned that, but it's universal rock-speak for "This *grooves*." I've even felt a little self-conscious bobbing my head while enjoying classical music performances…while at the same time wondering why more people in the audience aren't doing the same!

It helps to remember that the word is essentially an abbreviated form of *in the groove*. Now a real image begins to form. You can picture something—a needle, for instance, on a record player—sliding along steadily, right in the groove (of a vinyl disc). Alternately, you can picture that object flitting around, popping out of the groove and then landing back in, which gives you an idea of *not* grooving. To me, any music, regardless of genre, that has the proverbial needle gliding along without interruption can be said to groove. And like lots of things, the job of grooving falls on everyone in the ensemble, although the drummer can certainly take extra responsibility for keeping it all on course. Our cover artist, Brooks Wackerman, brings a most assured sense of groove to Bad Religion's furious punk rock, and his bandmates know they can always count on him to keep the music feeling great.

Now, what about one of groove's cousins, vibe? In this month's Concepts article, "Playing Moods," Jeremy Hummel raises the topic of vibe and pushes us to consider the emotions we're conveying through the drums. He offers food for thought on the kinds of patterns on the kit that can highlight certain feelings in the music.

So next time you're practicing, maybe you can spend a chunk of time working on concrete ideas like four-way coordination (this issue's Strictly Technique) and tempo-solidifying click exercises (Jazz Drummer's Workshop), and then you can get a bit more abstract and think about groove and vibe while you're playing. Record yourself playing a beat several different ways—tightly and then loosely, say, or with the hi-hat pattern loud and then soft—and pay attention to how that affects the flow and character of the rhythms. You'll be sure to find ideas to explore the next time you're arranging a song or performing with a band.

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Mind Matters

I'd like to comment on Bernie Schallehn's "My Dad's Kit" response in the April 2011 It's Questionable. I played in my first band for a couple years on my dad's '60s Crest kit. It didn't sound great, but it got the job done. I later bought my own six-piece kit and lugged it around. Now, eighteen years later, I play more often than ever and use a four-piece all the time, while my "baby" sits at home longing for a suitable gig. My advice is, have patience, play some gigs first, but get your own kit when you can. Thanks, *MD*!
Joseph Seltzer

Joe Morello Tribute Video

I want to say how much I enjoyed Steve Fidyk's 5/4 tribute solo to Joe Morello on moderndrummer.com. Although Steve and I have never met, I've heard a lot about him over the years, and I also studied with Joe for about six years. Unfortunately, I did not see Joe the last few years of his life, although I did speak with him on the phone from time to time, and his wife and my mom got very close. Joe did so much for me as a player, and his kindness was second to none, as you know. Through his music and his students, Joe's legacy will live on forever. God bless!
Chris Coles

I just viewed Steve Fidyk's 5/4 drum solo tribute to Joe Morello on the *Modern Drummer* website. Well done and a fitting tribute! I noticed that at the end of the video Steve displays several photos of Joe, including one from a 2003 performance. That particular photo struck me because it was taken at a concert Joe gave at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in conjunction with the Dickinson College Jazz Band. I was the drummer of the school jazz band at the time and arranged to have Joe perform. I grew up in northern NJ and studied with Jerry Bogner, himself a student of Morello's, for many years. I saw Joe perform several times, but his performance at Dickinson was extra special for me. Joe's passing is a great loss for the drum community, and seeing this photo reminded me of the personal relationship I had with him at that time. He will be missed.
David Rodbart

The Doctor Is In: Drumming and Pregnancy

I have been playing professionally for thirty-six years, and I am currently the drummer and vocalist in City Sounds Music. I'd like to comment on the question in the March 2011 issue (It's Questionable) about drumming during pregnancy. I gigged through each of my three pregnancies, and my children—sixteen, twenty-two, and twenty-five—have had no adverse hearing effects. I agree that it's important to maintain hydration during the gig. And there could be times when you have morning sickness while playing. I used to keep crackers on stage.
Rhonda Grindell

Style & Analysis

I love *MD* magazine, and as a working pro I make it my first pick as a link to all things drums. I'm a huge JR Robinson fan. I actually own a green glass DW set that was built for him, which he sold to a friend and mentor of mine, Donny Gruendler. I did notice a transcription error in Terry Branam's Style & Analysis section in the April 2011 issue. In measure 3 of "Rock With You," the bass drum plays on beats 1 and 3. I'm not trying to do anyone's job, but that is a pretty legendary groove.
Ryan Smith

You're right, Ryan. Here's the correct pattern.

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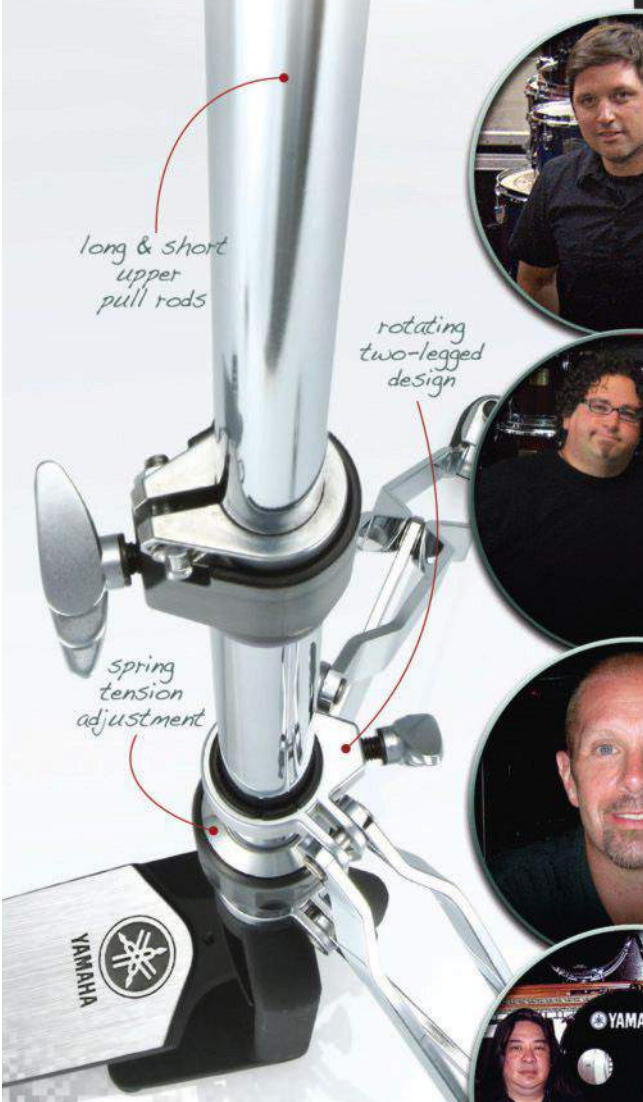

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MARK FERBER

Cracking the code in NYC

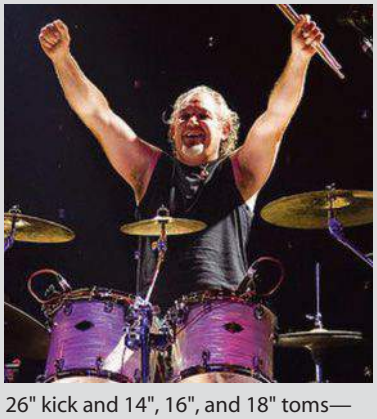
California-to–New York transplant Mark Ferber has played on more than ninety recordings, cracking the hard nut of Manhattan musicians' circles with his stinging straight-ahead style. Originally a big band drummer, Ferber worked with such renowned L.A. musicians as Bud Shank, Bill Perkins, and Conte Candoli. Recent recordings such as Jonathan Kreisberg's *Shadowless*, Alexis Cuadrado's *Noneto Ibérico*, and brother Alan Ferber's *Music for Nonet and Strings: Chamber Songs*, however, show Mark's considerable skills in the small-group setting.

Ferber's credits are impressive, but when the drummer arrived in New York City in 2000, he didn't take the typical path to jazz success. "New York was the place to be," Ferber says. "Everyone wanted to talk and learn about music. But I didn't know many people when I got here. I wasn't into jam sessions, which can be such a crapshoot. So I found a house in Brooklyn and invited musicians that I wanted to play with and thought could challenge me to come and play. All the New York City guys came out: Ben Monder, Steve Cardenas, Jonathan Kreisberg…."

Ferber's skill set is reflected in a bit of advice to the next generation of jazz drummers. "Do a lot of listening as far as the classic recordings, the important drummers," Mark says. "You have to understand the currents of what's happening now, which is all over the map—every tempo, meter, and style imaginable. Acquire all the vocabulary, the nuts and bolts of playing, and have your reading together. That opens up a lot of opportunities. People expect you to play their material down, and you'll miss opportunities if you can't do that. You don't always get a second chance." **Ken Micallef**

ANDY PARKER

Still flying high with **UFO**



The powerful, rock-steady drumming of Andy Parker played an integral part in launching UFO into the spotlight of '70s hard rock. Parker's uncluttered approach works perfectly on the hits "Rock Bottom," "Too Hot to Handle," "Let It Roll," and "Doctor, Doctor," the kind of timeless anthems that prompted VH1 to count the group among its list of the 100 Greatest Artists of Hard Rock.

"I was, and still am, a John Bonham fanatic," Parker says. "I purchased my first Ludwig kit in pink champagne finish—with a 26" kick and 14", 16", and 18" toms—from Humble Pie drummer Jerry Shirley. I then found a matching kick and 13" tom and began playing double bass starting with the UFO *Force It* LP. I've been playing it ever since. I used that Ludwig kit on all the early LPs, up to *Obsession*."

Despite the blown-out setup, Parker claims he's never played a drum solo in his life. "UFO isn't that kind of band," he says. "You wouldn't expect Charlie Watts to solo with the Stones, or Phil Rudd to solo with AC/DC. To me, playing drums has always been about creating music with other musicians, not sitting in a room and seeing how good you can get."

Parker, who currently plays Tama and Premier drums, Paiste cymbals, Liberty snare drums, and Jim Beier custom snare drums, left UFO in 1983, when "it wasn't fun anymore." He returned for brief spells a couple of times after that and rejoined permanently in 2005. "It's great to be back," he says. "I'm enjoying the band more than ever." **Mike Haid**

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ISAAC CARPENTER on *The Taking* by Duff McKagan's Loaded

Jeff White

On *The Taking*, the new album by former Guns n' Roses bassist Duff McKagan's band, Loaded, Isaac Carpenter says he worked closely with producer Terry Date on getting drum sounds—and learned a thing or two in the process. "I discovered that if you record with really big cymbals," Carpenter explains, "they're going to drown out the toms and snare in the room mics. I also used to use a bell-brass snare drum, but it was so loud that it made my toms sound wimpy. So I've been recording mostly with a Ludwig Supra-Phonic or Black Beauty snare.

"I don't play with much finesse," Carpenter continues. "I hit really hard, all the time. So if I pre-mix the kit to sound balanced in the room mics, I know I'm going to get great drum tracks."

A big chunk of *The Taking* was the result of McKagan and Carpenter writing and recording in the drummer's rehearsal space. "We had a creative explosion and wrote about sixteen songs in two months," Carpenter says. "It's the most fulfilling musical collaboration I've ever experienced." **Mike Haid**

MELVIN BALDWIN

Enabling **Justin Bieber**'s domination on the world stage

Although megastar Justin Bieber can sling the sticks himself, touring drummer Melvin Baldwin is the conduit that funnels the crowd's energy back onto the bandstand. Baldwin's first show with Bieber was on *Oprah*—which was also, it must be said, the first time the veteran drummer met the pop singer and his band. "We flew into Chicago the day before the taping," Baldwin explains, "ran through it a couple of times, and have been moving ever since."

With the release of the recent movie *Justin Bieber: Never Say Never*, it's clear that Bieber fever is only increasing. "It's crazy!" Baldwin confirms. "We're playing very large venues on this tour, and to hear that much high-pitched screaming is unreal. Whatever Justin does is magical for his fans."

Besides touring the world with acts like BBD, the Indigo Girls, and Victor Wooten, Baldwin has also produced numerous artists over the years, and he says the production mindset flows into his drumming. With Bieber, for example, Baldwin carefully adds live elements to the original drum parts without taking away from the song. The show is packed with a variety of hits, including band favorites like "Up," the funk-flavored "Bigger," and the ballad "That Should Be Me."

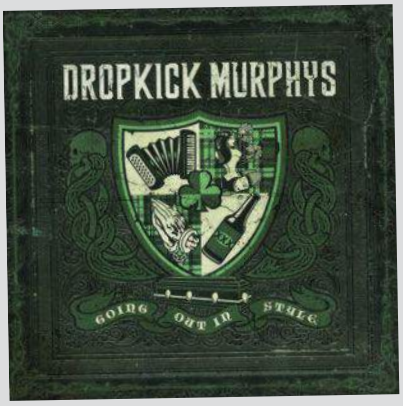
During the portion of the show where Bieber pays tribute to Michael Jackson, Baldwin shares drumming duties with the young star. Baldwin, who acknowledges the importance of woodshedding, reports that Bieber tries to find time in his busy schedule to practice the drums. "Drumming has become so much more competitive," Melvin says. "There are a lot of extraordinary young players out there, and you have to practice to keep up. I try to reinvent myself every year so that I don't sound dated or stale."

Derek Wolfford

MATT KELLY

Mixing and matching with **Dropkick Murphys**

Matt Kelly, who's been laying down unstoppable punk/Irish beats for the Dropkick Murphys for fifteen years, keeps it coming on the band's seventh album, *Going Out in Style*. Kelly's influences might surprise some fans. "I grew up listening to bands like Zeppelin and AC/DC," Matt says. "Phil Rudd's feel and timing were impeccable; his approach to drumming gave it a real sexy feel. Then guys like Nicko McBrain would always add tom and ride flourishes and had a military flair on the snare. I incorporate all of that."



Those influences, combined with the experiences of playing in marching band in school and busking on the streets of Germany, plus the discovery of bands like Agnostic Front, have resulted in the drummer's own Celtic-folk-hardcore-punk style. "Marching band helped me apply the rudiments to the whole kit, which then inspired cooler tom patterns," Kelly says. "We do a lot of slip jigs and shuffle beats, so I try to apply paradiddles on the hi-hat and stuff like that. I take an unorthodox approach to punk rock and Irish folk music by playing what the song calls for without being predictable."

Kerry Brett

Steven Douglas Losey

Also on the Shelves

Ark Ovrutski Quintet Sounds of Brasil (Duduka Da Fonseca) /// **Walter Beltrami** Paroxysmal Postural Vertigo (Jim Black) /// **Ohad Talmor** NewsReel (Dan Weiss) /// **Avery Sharpe** Running Man (Yoron Israel) /// **Agogic** Agogic (Evan Woodle) /// **Jeff Coffin/Jeff Sipe** Duet (Jeff Sipe) /// **Laura Kahle** Circular (Jeff "Tain" Watts) /// **Lou Volpe** Hear and Now (Buddy Williams) /// **Lisa Hilton** Underground (Nasheet Waits) /// **Human Element** Human Element (Gary Novak) /// **Jag Panzer** The Scourge of the Light (Rikard Stjernquist) /// **Atsuko Hashimoto** …Until the Sun Comes Up (Jeff Hamilton) /// **Kneebody** You Can Have Your Moment (Nate Wood) /// **Big Head Blues Club** 100 Years of Robert Johnson (Brian Nevin, Cedric Burnside) /// **Billy Joel** Billy Joel Live at Shea Stadium (Chuck Burgi) /// **Rory Gallagher** Irish Tour reissue (Rod de'Ath) /// **Ben Williams** State of Art (Jamire Williams) /// **Ben Waters** Boogie 4 Stu (Charlie Watts, Ady Milward, Clive Thacker) /// **Chantale Gagné** Wisdom of the Water (Lewis Nash)

On Tour

Matt Marquez with Norma Jean /// **Wuv** with P.O.D. /// **Brian Downey** with Thin Lizzy /// **Dominique Messier** with Celine Dion /// **Don Brewer** with Bob Seger & the Silver Bullet Band /// **Rich Redmond** with Jason Aldean /// **Joe Goretti** with Moby

PAUL WERTICO AND JOHN MARSHALL

by Ken Micallef

One broke boundaries with one of the greatest jazz guitarists of the modern age. The other followed Robert Wyatt and Tony Williams into two of the most important British fusion bands of the '60s and '70s. **This month we hook them up for a fascinating exploration of the first meetings of jazz and rock.**

When he's not performing with his Mid-East/Mid-West Alliance, with Marbin featuring bassist Steve Rodby (check out the album *Breaking the Cycle*), or in any number of other situations that abolish the restraints imposed by stylistic labels, former Pat Metheny drummer Paul Wertico puts in long hours as the director of jazz and contemporary music studies at Chicago's Roosevelt University. He remains one of the most active and restless musical minds on the contemporary jazz scene, whose stylistic constraints he habitually challenges.

John Marshall is perhaps best known for his work on the British fusion band Soft Machine's '70s recordings *Fifth*, *Six*, *Seven*, *Bundles*, *Softs*, and *Alive & Well*, albums that show stunningly high levels of creativity, subtlety, and intricacy. Marshall's lengthy credits also include records with such bold English artists as Jack Bruce, Graham Collier, Mike Westbrook, John Surman, and the group Nucleus. Today Marshall plays with various European artists as well as with Soft Machine Legacy, with whom he's recorded the albums *Live Adventures* and *Steam*.

MD monitored a transatlantic call between Wertico and Marshall, with plenty of surprises, agreements, and laughter erupting along the way.

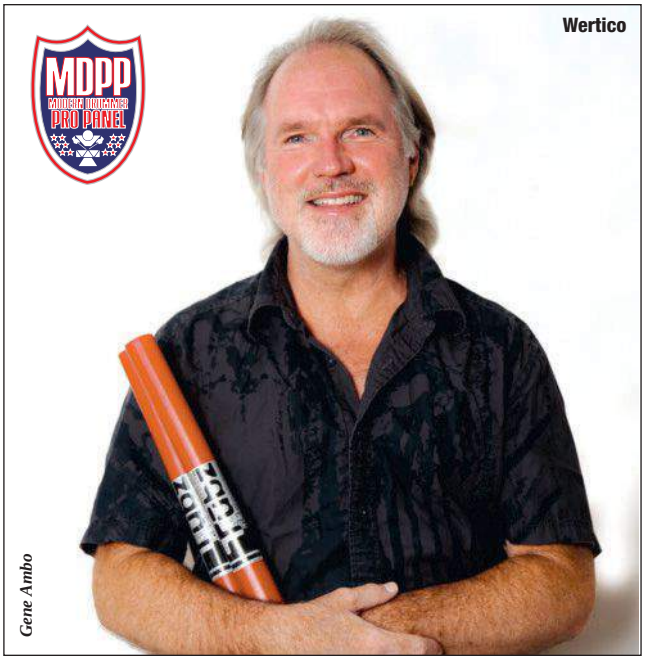
Paul: I've loved your playing for years, John. I remember playing along with Jack Bruce's *Harmony Row* and with Soft Machine—all those odd meters! You were part of that whole British scene—straight-ahead jazz, avant-garde jazz, progressive rock, blues-rock—and you've kept your style. But you're not a lick player. You just make music happen.

John: Thank you, Paul. Your comments are more than reciprocated. I just play what comes next. When it comes to drumming, you have to deal with what is before you. If you try to get together with the musicians, then the style of the music takes care of itself. And hopefully what you're playing will be appropriate but slightly different.

Paul: You studied with Allan Ganley and Philly Joe Jones. Who were your influences?

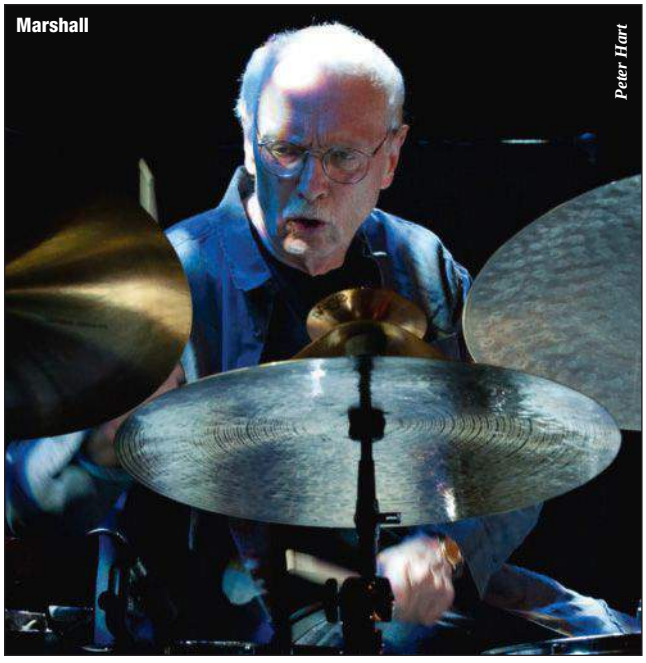
John: Yes, Philly Joe lived in London for a year in 1968, and I was fortunate enough to study with him. He was an amazing character. Before Philly Joe, I studied with Allan Ganley and with Jim Marshall, a drummer who went on to found Marshall amplifiers. He would write out drum charts from big band records, with a fair amount of rudiments but mainly concentrating on hand and foot independence using Jim Chapin's book.

Philly Joe really focused on rudiments; he taught from Charley Wilcoxon's *Modern Rudimental Swing Solos*. And he taught brushwork. He said, "If your brushwork looks good, it will sound good." That made sense. If your *movements* flow, they will sound good. Philly Joe made me realize that rudiments were the key. He made



Wertico

Gene Ambo


Marshall

Peter Hart

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sense of the rudiments. But he didn't think I could play rudiments using matched grip! The standard practice among many drummers in England then was to play traditional grip, which I hardly ever did.

MD: That is unusual.

John: Most people think the supremacy of matched grip in the U.K. came from the rock drummers of the 1960s. But it came in the '50s, from a very brilliant and charismatic jazz drummer here called Phil Seamen, who played matched. He was so charismatic that other drummers just followed him.

Paul: Seamen was Ginger Baker's teacher, and if you watch footage of him on YouTube, it's like watching Ginger Baker. His matched grip was like half French, half African. It's not the palm-down German grip at all.

MD: Before Soft Machine and Nucleus, you played on commercial sessions, right, John?

John: I did all kinds of stuff. There was so much studio work going on then. It filtered out from the hardcore studio guys like Ronnie Verrell, who dominated the studios. But I did movies, TV, jingles. I'm on the Albert Finney movie *Gumshoe*, Andrew Lloyd Webber's first film score. Another one is *All Neat in Black Stockings*, a swinging-'60s film. The first thing you heard was the drums. I did quite a few film sessions, but often you didn't know what you were playing on. You were told to be at a certain studio at a certain time.

Paul: Did you play on any pop singles?

John: My first proper session was doing bluebeat music, which was the precursor to reggae. It was "My Boy Lollipop" by Millie Small [a number-one global smash in 1964]. It was in a big heavyweight studio, horn section and everything. The drum part was there, but as I was reading the chart I realized the second half was missing. Everyone else kept on playing, but I didn't have the rest of the chart! It was the ultimate nightmare. I felt rather overwhelmed, but luckily we had to run the pieces down a couple times. I plucked up the courage to query the part, and the music director added the missing section.

Paul: By the later '60s, you were such a big part of that British scene, where everyone seemed open-minded. Big band was accepted, avant-garde, jazz, blues-rock—everything.

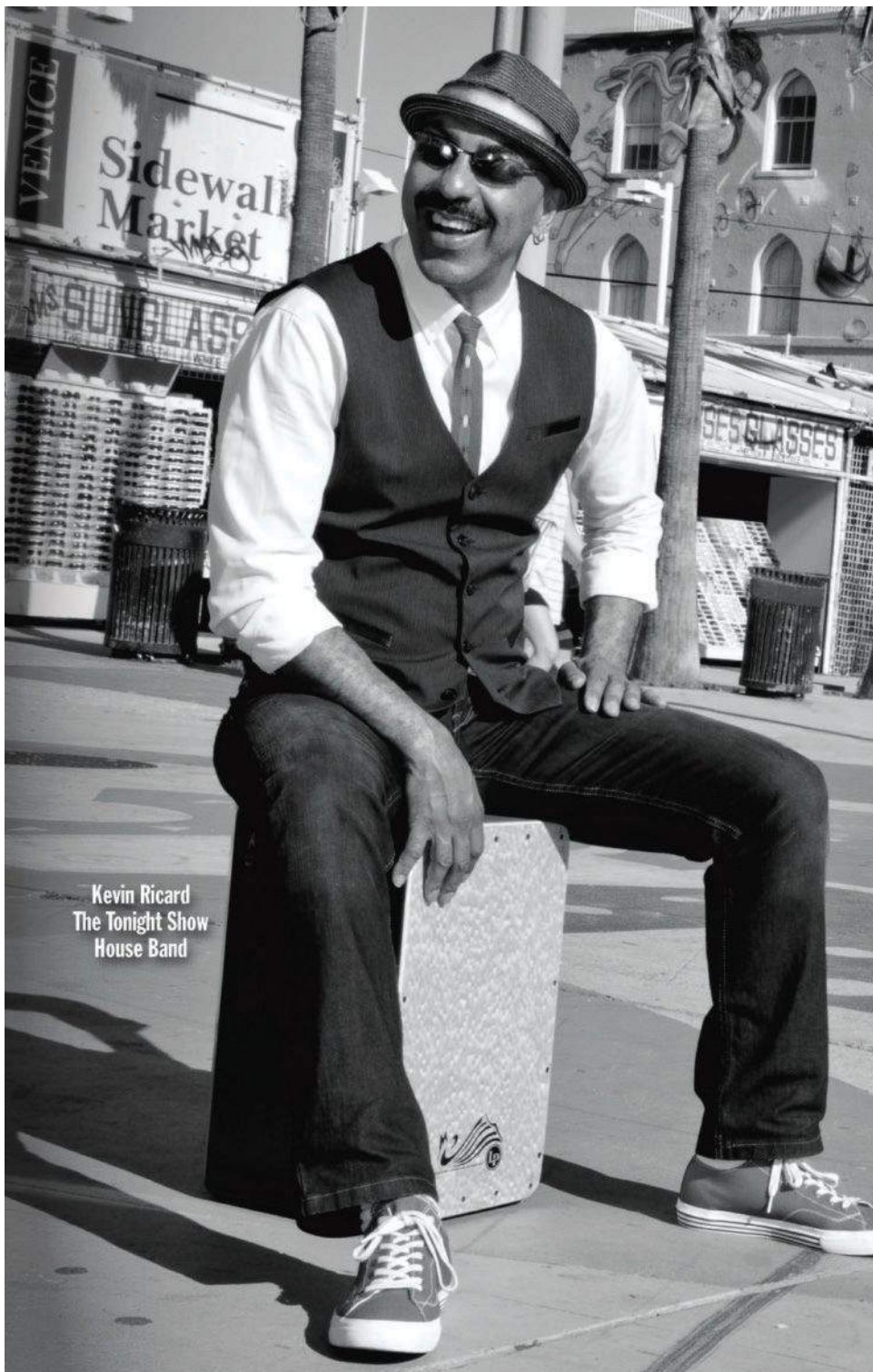
John: The music scene just got gigantic. No one had to watch their territory. And there was this whole collection of extraordinarily talented people working together. You'd bump into them on the street!

Paul: That period is really the beginning of groups playing odd meters. There had been Joe Morello with Dave Brubeck, and Max Roach, as well as the Don Ellis Orchestra, but really, until Mahavishnu Orchestra hit, there wasn't that much playing in these unusual meters. The British musicians were doing it so early on.

John: In Graham Collier's band we would do pieces where the meter changed every bar. It sounds horrific, but if it's written properly, it's logical. It only becomes a problem if you make it a problem. Odd-meter stuff is in an odd meter for a reason, not for the sake of doing it in an odd meter alone. It must be part of the flavor or the groove. Then it makes sense. If you're playing in 4/4, you have that in-built resolution on even beats. But in odd meters you have to break that down. The problem comes when you start playing in 4/4 again!

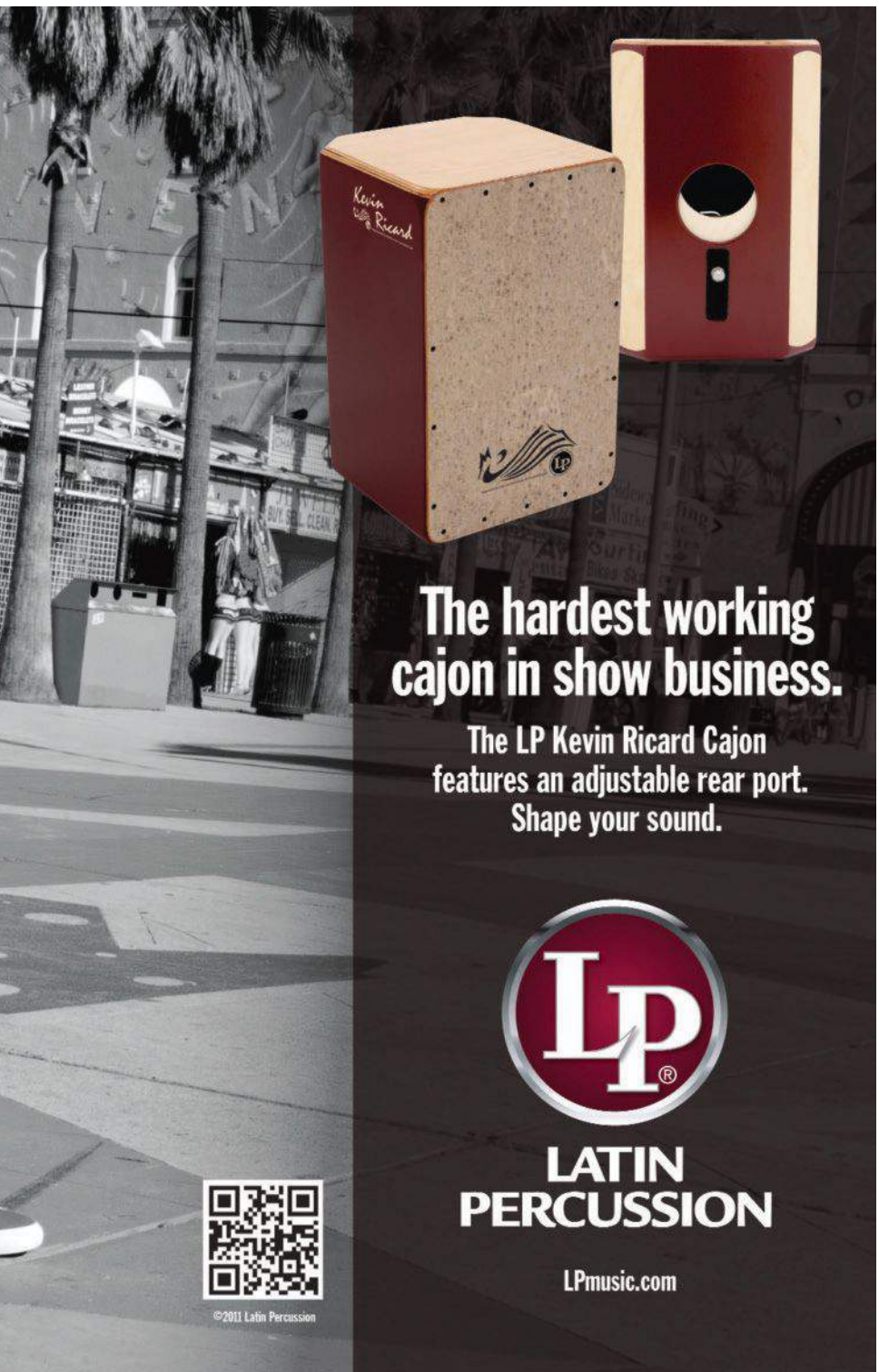
Paul: Early on, did you play from written-out charts, from head charts, or learning by rote?

John: It was always written down. That's the way I get things together. It's normal for other musicians to be given the part, but not always the drummer. I'd like a part too. It doesn't have to be a drum part. It can be just a lead sheet, the melody line. That's how I learned things. Especially with odd meters, it's really handy to know exactly where your contribution lies.



Kevin Ricard
The Tonight Show
House Band

Paul: So even on the Jack Bruce records, where your rhythms might include an extra beat or two, you had lead sheets?
John: Jack would write out a proper drum part. On *Harmony Row*, quite a few of the tracks were recorded with just drums and him on acoustic guitar. You needed a proper part.
MD: How did you develop your technique into the '70s?
John: I did quite a bit of practice, but it was really about playing with other musicians. That's the best practice there is. With Nucleus, Jack Bruce, and Soft Machine, I would spend time before the gig practicing singles and doubles around the kit. I liked moving lines, putting the hi-hat and bass drum accents in different places.
Paul: By 1972, you're playing with Soft Machine. The record that really got to me was *Seven*. The tunes are so aggressive, in a subdued but driving way. "Nettle Bed" and those songs are killing. And the odd meters! What are the nuts and bolts of playing odd-meter music when the bars change constantly?
John: There's a track on *Harmony Row* like that called "A Letter of Thanks," though if you listen you wouldn't know it's in odd meters. You learn the tune. The fact that there is an odd beat becomes secondary. There are solos—one is in seven—then the song changes and goes into nine. Generally with odd meters you establish something in your head that allows you to hold on to the meter and play relatively loose.
Paul: Like a clave-type pattern.
John: Exactly. If you're in seven, you keep that kind of clave in mind. I often think of it in terms of fast and slow beats. A 7/4 bar, for example, can be thought of as four quarter notes plus three quarter notes—a count of one, two, three, four, one, two, three. If you then think of two half notes in place of the four quarter notes, you get a count of a slow two plus a fast three—a count of ONE and TWO, one, two, three. That's much easier to hold in your mind than counting each quarter note. You can adapt this approach for different subdivisions and other time signatures. If someone writes something that makes melodic sense, you can do it.
Paul: It was like that in Metheny's group. We played stuff in 22/8 and 45/8, and it always made sense because the melody was in that meter. You could sing the melody, and you'd be in that particular time signature.
MD: What drums and cymbals were you playing with Soft Machine?
John: At first with Soft Machine I had a Hayman kit, and then I moved to Italian Hollywood drums made by Meazzi, which Jack DeJohnette and Max Roach also played. They were very innovative—they had a floor tom with a pedal so you could change the pitch, like timpani. And you could have the whole set on wheels if you wanted—wheel them right off the stage. I played Hollywood until '76, when I went with Sonor. And I've always played Paiste cymbals.
Paul: I actually have one of those Hollywood floor toms, and I love it!
MD: Was original Soft Machine drummer Robert Wyatt an influence on your work with the band?
John: I've been in a lot of bands where the previous drummer had a big presence. When that happens I adopt the same attitude as in any gig that involves creative music: The music starts today. So no, I wasn't that influenced by Robert Wyatt. The material was different anyway. I turned up to the rehearsal, and we played. The band hires you for what you do. I followed Tony Williams in Jack Bruce's band—crikey, how do you live up to that? Well, you can't. I've learned that if you're following a great drummer it's ten times easier. The band is already playing everything in the right place!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VINTAGE PHONIC SNARE

I purchased a 6½x14 solid rosewood Sonor snare in 1972. It has ten lugs, a separate snare control on the butt end, and an internal muffler. The badge is gold and reads "Sonor since 1875." The serial number is 6208. Is this drum a collectible, and if so, how much would it be worth?
Stu Robins

According to drum historian Harry Cangany, "Yes, that's a '70s Sonor Phonic snare. Most Sonor sets in that series came with a ferromanganese metal snare with a parallel-action strainer. But Sonor offered matching 9-ply rosewood snares in 5½x14 and 6½x14 sizes. It's great to see that entire set in showroom condition with the period-correct hardware, including the vintage 5317 pedal with its rubber-grip footboard. Your snare was made in Germany, at a time when Sonor was owned by the Link family. Sonor drums were, and still are, well known and respected for their quality materials and manufacturing. Phonic series drums were also some of the heaviest to carry. Phonic snares had triple-flange hoops, as your snare has. Today that drum would sell for about $600, since it's in such great condition."

Mind Matters

Overcoming Common Mental Barriers in Music

by Bernie Schallehn

DRINKING, DRUGGING, AND DRUMMING

I often have a couple drinks before gigs, including some afternoon wedding receptions. I do this just to loosen up and take the edge off. My wife says I'm an alcoholic because I'm drinking during the day. I never drink to the point of being falling-down drunk, and our bandleader hasn't seemed to notice any problem with my playing. What's your take on this?
Donald W.

On his album *Life Is Messy*, country artist Rodney Crowell sings a song called "It's Not for Me to Judge." That's where I'm at with your situation. Realize, though, that if your wife drags you to an alcoholism counselor, the counselor will say that you're engaging in what the substance abuse treatment field calls relief drinking. By drinking, you're achieving relief from anxiety.

As drummers we're encouraged to stay loose and relaxed when we play. An uptight drummer's playing often sounds stiff, tension in the body can have adverse effects on time feel, and the audience doesn't want to look at a musician who's a bundle of nerves. Alcohol is a drug that reliably induces relaxation. There are certainly other ways to achieve relaxation, but alcohol and other drugs—specifically minor tranquilizers like Xanax and Valium—are reliable substances for providing that feeling you desire.

Now, before you write in accusing me of promoting the use of alcohol and/or other drugs, realize that I'm simply explaining why humans use specific substances: The desired effect tends to be predicable and reliable should we choose to take the drug.

With you, Donald, there's a strong association between performing and lowering your anxiety with alcohol. Chugging a few drinks by yourself before a gig has no social benefit, like what you would experience drinking a beer or two at the end of the night with your bandmates. There's a big difference between the two situations.

There's a model for understanding alcohol and drug use, called "medicating for feelings," that appears to fit your particular case.

Let's look at another drug that musicians may be prone to use: cocaine. Let's pretend that your band makes the leap from small clubs to concert venues. You've hit the big time! There's no book or college course to prepare you for this. You feel a mixture of excitement and, perhaps, outright fear. If you choose to deal with the fear by using a drug, you'll either want to go "up" or "down." If you're feeling inadequate, ill prepared, or just plain terrified to face a

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IT'S QUESTIONABLE

throng of screaming fans before a performance, you may be drawn to a drug that induces feelings of competence, confidence, power, and control. Snorting powder cocaine or smoking crack just before the gig will give you those feelings. (Again, I'm not promoting the use of cocaine; I'm just explaining why, and in which context, an individual may choose to use the drug.)

The flip side is to choose to deal with your anxiety by using some sort of sedative. In this situation you're looking to bring the excitement level down. In 1973, while playing a concert at the Cow Palace in California, the Who's Keith Moon collapsed onto his kit after supposedly taking animal tranquilizers. I'm guessing he wanted to quell some of the anxiety related to the pandemonium of this particular show.

After becoming sober, Ringo Starr admitted to not remembering many of the concerts at the huge venues where the Beatles had played. In the drug and alcohol treatment field, this state of not remembering is called a blackout.

Okay, so now that I've explained the models, I have a few questions for you. First, what feelings are you medicating for? Your relationship with alcohol is an important one, since you have to go to a liquor store to buy booze before your gigs. That's a commitment that you *choose* to make.

Your relationship with alcohol also has a specific association: Drink, and then play. Can you perform in public without having alcohol in your system? What would happen if you didn't have access to alcohol before playing a gig? Do you fear that your hands and feet wouldn't move?

I remember a drummer stating in an interview something to the effect that after he quit drinking he had to relearn how to do everyday tasks without alcohol. It's similar to when someone quits smoking cigarettes. When you were a smoker, your whole day was filled with associations. Wake up, light up. Finish breakfast, fire up a smoke. Turn the key in your car's ignition, reach for your lighter. Depending on how many packs a former smoker smoked, there could have been up to eighty associations per day.

You asked for my take on your situation, and there you have it. No judging, no preaching, just an explanation as to why someone might consume a mood-altering chemical, followed by some hard questions that you need to ask yourself. At one point in my counseling career, I worked at an inpatient drug rehab. The walls were covered with signs displaying slogans and catchphrases. There was one in particular—with a decidedly non–Alcoholics Anonymous philosophy—that will always stay with me. It was handwritten and encased in a simple black frame. It read: "Habits are at first cobwebs…then cables."

Bernie Schallehn has been a drummer and percussionist for over forty-five years. He holds a master's degree in counseling psychology and, while in private practice, held the credentials of a certified clinical mental health counselor and a certified alcohol and substance abuse counselor.

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LEADING THE WORLD
ONE PAIR AT A TIME

YAMAHA Club Custom and GigMaker Drumkits

by J.R. Frondelli

Yamaha's singular goal is to "build it right," and the company seems to achieve this a majority of the time, whether we're talking motorcycles, auto engines, professional audio gear, pianos, electronic keyboards and synths, brass and woodwinds, guitars, or drums and percussion. A good number of Yamaha's professional audio and musical products have become industry standards. The Recording Custom series of drums, for example, which debuted in the late '70s, is the choice of many top professionals the world over. Though the dominance of that line has diminished slightly, many great live and recording artists still entrust their signature drum sound to Yamaha, including Steve Gadd, Dave Weckl, Anton Fig, Steve Jordan, Keith Carlock, Billy Cobham, David Garibaldi, Mickey Curry, Paul Leim, Questlove, and Clyde Stubblefield.

One of the reasons why the company can do things so well is its autonomous nature. Yamaha has its own factories that produce every fitting and shell for its drums, right down to the tension rods and screws. While Yamaha has traditionally been associated with the "EQ'd" sound of birch and the punchy sound of maple, it likes to throw curveballs here and there with drums made of oak, beech, bamboo, fiberglass, and even carbon fiber.

The kits being reviewed here fit right into Yamaha's standards of excellence. We begin with the new Club Custom series, developed in cooperation with drummer/producer Steve Jordan. This line is a double-edged throwback, to Yamaha's pre-professional drum days of taillight lugs and colorful patterned wrap finishes, and also as a sonic departure into warmer, vintage-type sounds.

Next up is the GigMaker, which is also a throwback to the days when Yamaha drums were produced as high-quality yet snazzy-looking entry-level kits. Both of these sets, though situated at far different price points, hark back to the company's roots, and therein lies the Yamaha secret: quality at all levels.

CLUB CUSTOM

When I first saw the Club Custom drums, I was immediately drawn to the finishes, which are swirls of orange, blue, or black. Though they appear to be a wrap from a distance, as you get up close you can see and feel that they are, in fact, lacquer. Yamaha craftsmen accomplish this by first shooting a base coat in the main color. Then the swirl color (yellow for swirl orange, white on the others) is added to the drum while the shell is being spun horizontally, and the craftsman pulls the swirl color across the shell with a rope. Though this process might smack of elementary spin art, it's performed with surgical precision, utilizing skilled eyes and hands. The result is gorgeous and achieves the wrap look with a lacquer finish, which is less restrictive on shell resonance.

Our review kit is a four-piece in swirl orange, with a 15x20, 10-lug bass drum with matching orange lacquer hoops; an 8x12 tom with a YESS mount; a 14x14 floor tom; and a $5^1/_2$x14 snare. The floor tom legs feature floating rubber tips, and all drums sport the company's low-mass Oak Custom lug with locking inserts.

Lightweight 1.6 mm steel hoops are standard on Club Custom toms and snares, and the tom mount is included with the kit. The thin 6-ply, 6 mm shells are made from a native Japanese wood called kapur, which is similar to mahogany in weight, appearance, and tone. Kapur produces a warm and woody sound with just the right balance of attack and resonance. This is supported by Yamaha's R3 bearing edges, which are 60-degree (more commonly known as 30-degree, depending on whether you measure from the vertical or horizontal axis) with enough of a roundover to assist seating the heads while still retaining sustain and high frequencies. The heads on the kit are Yamaha by Remo: Coated Ambassador snare and tom batters, Clear Ambassador bottoms, Clear Powerstroke 3 kick batter, and Smooth White Powerstroke 3 on the resonant side. All of the features built into Club Custom drums are designed to maximize resonance and capitalize on the sonic thumbprint of the kapur shells.

HOW DO THEY SOUND?

I had a blast playing this kit. Everything sounded warm, open, and resonant, yet controlled. I have never, in my forty-plus years as a drummer, played a 20" kick with this much punch and resonance. The snare produced the signature Yamaha sound: thick and focused with just enough resonance, but including a little added warmth. The tuning range of these drums was pretty wide, so you could get sounds for rock, bebop, and everything in between. All in all, I could hear distinct vintage tones coming from the kit, but with a slightly modern edge and the drum-to-drum consistency that's a Yamaha hallmark. Club Custom shell packs list for $4,450.

GIGMAKER

If the Club Custom is the retro upscale roadster, the GigMaker is the feature-laden economy car. Though it's an entry-level model, the GigMaker doesn't leave you wanting for much, providing budding drummers with a complete, solid kit to get started on and offering the semipro a low-cost, quality alternative that's decidedly all Yamaha.

The review kit is the "complete" configuration, which includes a five-piece shell pack with a tom holder, a five-piece hardware pack, and a set of Paiste 101 cymbals. There's a 16x20 bass drum, 8x10 and 9x12 toms, a 14x14 floor tom, and a $5^1/_2$ x14 snare. Our review kit features the shimmering yet subdued silver glitter wrap. Other

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available finishes are black glitter, blue ice glitter, burgundy glitter, and white grape glitter (which is actually green).

THE GIGMAKER SOUND

This kit delivered some serious goods, even with the supplied factory heads (a prime area of cost cutting on all entry-level kits), and the signature Yamaha drum-to-drum consistency was quite evident. All of the drum hardware features nice chrome plating. Of special note are the springless lugs and the tom holder, which has Yamaha's trademark hex-arm/ball-joint system and includes memory locks. This holder allows you to position the toms exactly where you want them, and it holds them rock solid.

600 SERIES HARDWARE PACK

The GigMaker complete setup includes a 600 series hardware pack consisting of a hi-hat stand, a straight cymbal stand, a convertible straight/boom stand, a snare stand, and a bass drum pedal. Hardware has always been a forte of Yamaha's, and the 600 series is no exception. These are strong, well-built yet lightweight double-braced stands. Of particular note is the use of a non-ratcheted tilter on the snare stand. This is a very nice touch, since ratcheted tilters never quite seem to place the snare at the most comfortable angle. The bass drum pedal is very basic, but it was quick and responsive.

PAISTE 101 BRASS CYMBAL SET

Most drummers have been taught that brass makes poor cymbals. Leave it up to Paiste, experts at B20-alternative alloys, to figure out how to make brass sound good. No, 101 brass models don't sound like quality bronze cymbals, but they are musical with a subdued volume, plus a low-pitched dryness that I actually found useful and fun. They also have none of the trashy qualities you'd expect from budget brass pies.

Sensing that the reduced volume and dryness of these cymbals would record well, I miked the GigMaker kit with a stereo pair of overhead mics and recorded some beats onto my trusty Tascam 2488 recorder. The cymbals recorded nicely, balanced well with the drums, and never sounded shrill. What I heard upon playback was reminiscent of old Motown recordings. While these cymbals are decidedly entry level and suit that purpose well, it's not beyond the realm of possibility that pros could find them useful in certain lo-fi situations.

THE VERDICT?

The GigMaker is one of the finest entry-level kits on the market. As the owner of an entry-level Yamaha kit from the early '70s, which also sports quality and features far above its price range, I am happy to see that Yamaha hasn't forgotten its roots. The company has the engineering know-how and skills to build player's drumkits at any price point. Quality instruments foster the inspiration to make music, and the GigMaker fits the role to a T. The GigMaker complete setup lists for $1,300.
yamaha.com

GOING GREEN

GigMaker shells are lightweight 8-ply basswood/poplar, and they sport flawless 45-degree countercut bearing edges. The interior of the drums is unfinished, with no gnarly-looking inner plies that you'd typically find on entry-level kits. In an effort to join the green revolution, Yamaha's engineers have formulated the shell adhesives to have the lowest possible formaldehyde content.

ZILDJIAN

22" A Swish Knocker

by Thomas Wendt

The inverted China cymbal has played a serious role in the history of jazz drumming. One of the offshoots of the traditional trashy-sounding China is Zildjian's 22" A Swish Knocker—a unique instrument that was first popularized by Mel Lewis. This cymbal became a staple of Lewis's setup, whether the drummer was playing with a big band or a small group. While many of the Swish Knockers produced in the late '70s and '80s were heavier in weight, Lewis's Swish was relatively thin and low pitched. Zildjian and drummer John Riley, who currently holds down Lewis's old chair in the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, recently teamed up to redesign the Swish Knocker based on the late, great Lewis's original cymbal.

The new 22" Swish Knocker ($561) features a slightly higher profile than previous versions and comes installed with twenty rivets. As with Lewis's cymbal, this one has a nice medium-thin weight, which makes it ideal as both a ride and a crash. I had a great time experimenting with this model and found it to be unusually versatile. Although it's known primarily as a big band cymbal, the Swish Knocker also served me well in small-group settings (a piano trio and a saxophone quartet). With a big band, the Swish was great for sax soli choruses, where I needed to build momentum into the main shout chorus with the brass section. The cymbal worked equally well as a ride during an intense horn solo. In a small-group setting, I found that it made a good effects cymbal when a serious dynamic change was required, or when I wanted to use a different color.

THE ORIGINAL REFERENCE

To hear Mel Lewis playing his original 22" Swish Knocker, which is the exact cymbal that was used to create the new version, check out *20 Years at the Village Vanguard* and *The Definitive Thad Jones: Live From the Village Vanguard Vol. 1*, by the Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra. You can hear John Riley playing Lewis's cymbal on recent recordings by the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, including *Thad Jones Legacy* and *Can I Persuade You?*

Z3 Ultra Hammered Chinas

by David Ciauro

Zildjian Z3 Ultra Hammered Chinas are new additions to the popular Z3 line, and they incorporate some unique sonic variables, resulting in an extremely trashy yet nonabrasive sound. Offered in 19" ($253.95) and 21" ($285.95) versions, these Chinas incorporate a new bell design called the volcano cup, whose shape inverts on itself to create a unique curvature. Zildjian's principal designer for this cup, Matt Read, explains, "The volcano cup design helped enhance the trashiness of the cymbal, and that was the sound we were trying to achieve."

LOVE AT FIRST STRIKE

It immediately became apparent that the ultra-hammered edge of these Chinas makes for a much looser-feeling playing surface. The extensive hammering thins out the edges, but the large hammer marks seem to reinforce the cymbal. This duality creates an intense trashiness that's

somehow not jarring. The looseness of feel also allows the cymbal to be finessed for faster riding or even lighter accents. I took these Z3s out on a small club gig with a hard rock band and found I was able to evoke a full China effect without having to whale on them.

Striking with blunt force revealed the cymbals' tempestuous attack and volume, which is likely the reason why these Chinas found their home in the more metal-minded Z3 line. A significant benefit to the cymbals is that the trashiness is not accompanied by unruly gong-like qualities.

Overall, these Z3 Ultra Hammered Chinas were more diverse than I had expected, with an application that could stretch far beyond the metal realm. Evidence of this can be found in the fact that Dave Matthews Band drummer Carter Beauford converted to using both the 19" and 21" Z3 Ultra Hammered Chinas in his most recent setup.
zildjian.com

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The bodies of these Z3 Ultra Hammered Chinas reveal two side-by-side hoops of small pockmark hammer depressions, which interrupt the flow of vibrations to further trash up the sound. The ultra-hammered name, however, is drawn from the copious hammering pattern on the cymbals' lip.

LATIN PERCUSSION

Kevin Ricard Cajon and Cajon Mic System

by Mark Parsons

The Kevin Ricard signature model is LP's new flagship cajon. Designed by Spanish instrument maker Mario Cortés in conjunction with percussionist Ricard, whose high-profile gigs include *American Idol* and *The Tonight Show*, this version incorporates several features from the company's other cajons, while adding a few new unique touches.

CONSTRUCTION AND FEATURES

The body and front panel of the KR cajon are made of Finnish birch, with reinforcing elements consisting of composite materials. The dimensions are pretty typical (12x12x18). What's not typical about this cajon is that the side panels are cut in such a way that the body is angled back at the rear corners, in a half-octagon shape. This is said to focus the bass tones and add punch.

The KR cajon is a Flamenco-style drum, which means it has internal wires to create a snare sound and the front plate is glued and screwed to the body on all four sides (as opposed to being loose at the top). There are four guitar-string-type snare wires—two on each side—which are

adjustable in pairs (via a supplied Allen wrench) for a wide range of tones.

Other subtle sonic features include a wire with four small bells strung inside the drum, which adds a slight jingle to the notes. This was hard to hear under normal snares-on playing conditions, but if you strike the cajon on the side or detach the snares you'll clearly hear what the jingles contribute to the sound. There's also a low-tuned guitar string strung across the inside of the drum, which is meant to add sustain to bass notes. I'm not sure I could hear the difference, but plucking the string by itself produced a quiet note in the same range as the drum's fundamental pitch. So it certainly didn't hurt the overall sound by being there.

One unique feature of the Kevin Ricard cajon is the adjustable port. This is a sliding baffle inside the drum, which can be adjusted and locked into place by a knob on the back panel, allowing you to go from fully open to approximately three-quarters closed, and any point in between, in order to change the bass response of the drum.

IN USE

Right out of the box, this cajon had a great tone. The first thing I noticed was the deep, warm, and resonant bass response. The adjustable port also worked as advertised. Closing up the baffle halfway shortened the sustain of the bass note more than it changed the pitch or volume. Closing it more than that raised the pitch, killed the sustain, and lowered the overall volume of the bass note noticeably. While I generally preferred the sound with the port wide open, I found a range of useful sounds.

I was equally impressed with the high-end slap sounds of this cajon. All I did was de-tension the wires a tad to get a slightly wetter snare effect. (Cajons can choke easily when the wires are too tight.) The designers mitigated any unwanted buzz by adding three strips of hook-and-loop fasteners on the inside of the front panel, near the top, bottom, and middle. It's clear that a lot of thought went into the construction of this instrument.

So, is there anything not to like about this drum? I found two minor issues. First, the entire instrument has a clear, glossy, polyurethane-type finish, which leaves the seating area pretty slick. This may be a matter of personal preference, but I think a pad or at least a rougher nonslip surface might be a better choice. Likewise, the small rubber feet on the bottom seem like an afterthought; I've seen better feet on a $99 beginner cajon. Neither of these details is a deal-breaker, though—and both are easy to rectify if you like.

CONCLUSION

As far as cajons go, the Kevin Ricard signature model is relatively expensive, with a list price of $489. But you're getting a high-end professional instrument with great tone, good looks, and a wide range of sonic options, thanks to the innovative features built into the drum. If you're in the market for a quality flamenco-style cajon, you should definitely give this one an audition.

lpmusic.com

LP CAJON MIC SYSTEM

Acoustic designer Hector Torres has come up with a miking system that's intended to streamline the task of amplifying a cajon. The core of this deceptively simple product is a thin rectangular mount machined from a single $2^1/_2$x6 piece of hardwood that holds a boundary mic, the Audix ADX60. The mount and mic are attached to the rear of the cajon. No matter how you move or lean with the cajon, the mic remains in a consistent position.

IN USE

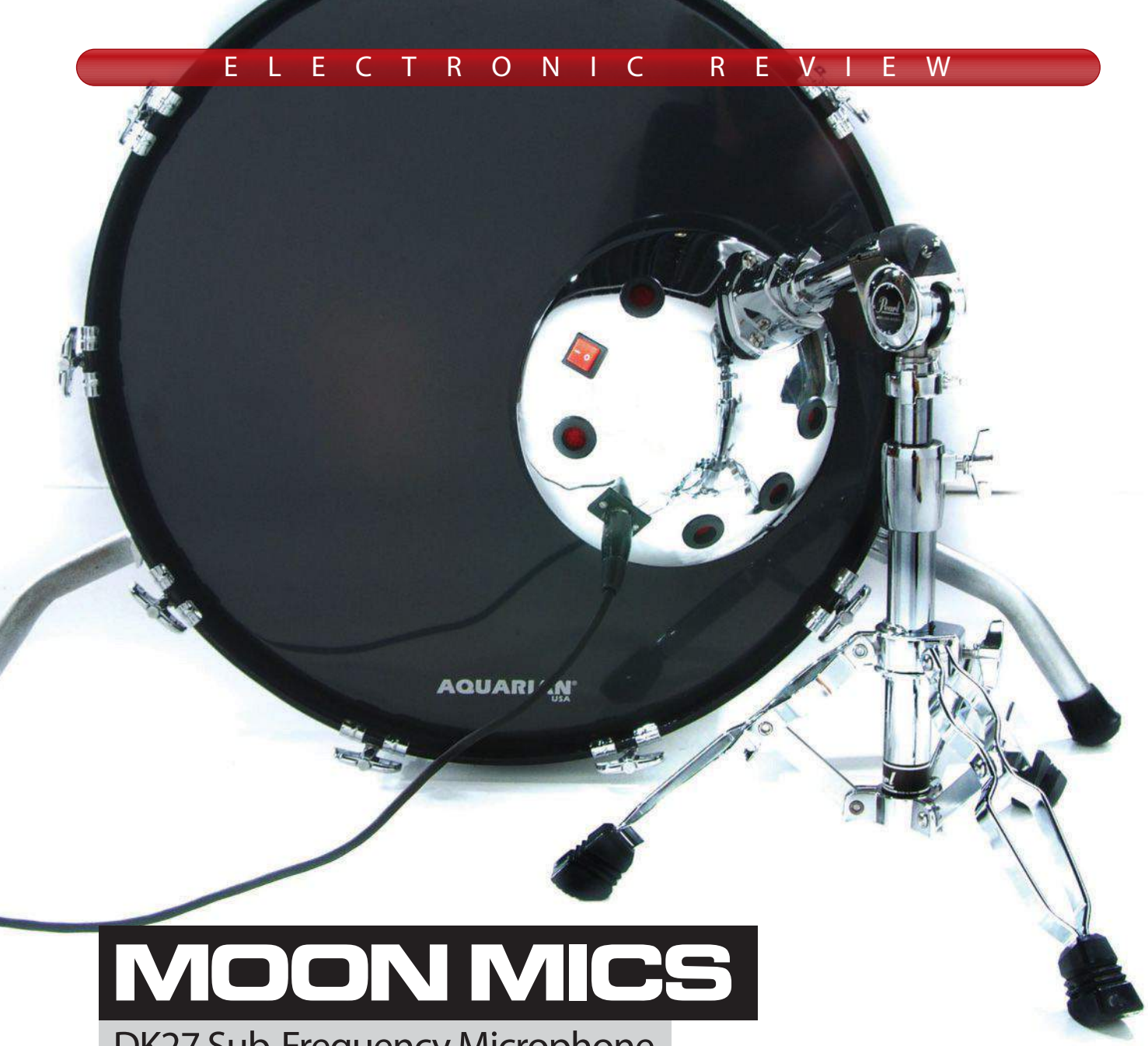
Location really matters when you're mounting the mic. Thankfully, there's a video on LP's website where Kevin Ricard suggests placing it near the bottom of the cajon's rear panel so the top of the mic ends up an inch or so below the bottom of the hole. In our testing, mounting the mic any closer to the hole produced a sound that was too boomy, and fixing it right at or inside the port yielded a "boingy" sound similar to the unequalized signal from an internal tom mic.

I used the mic and mount with a PA and in the studio, and in both cases I made similar EQ tweaks to arrive at a good sound. By itself, this setup—flat and dry—resulted in a sound that was pretty useful but had a little ringing in the upper midrange. It was a simple matter, though, to reduce the mids and balance the highs and lows to achieve a big, full sound through the speakers.

Because the ADX60 is a hemi-cardioid mic, it picks up only toward the body of the cajon, offering great isolation. (I could really crank the level before I got any stage noise or feedback—almost like plugging the instrument into a direct box.) And as a condenser, it has the necessary response to capture the full range of the instrument.

CONCLUSION

The LP Cajon Mic System is a very functional way to mike your cajon. It eliminates the need for boom stands on stage, provides great isolation, and produces a very useful sound without a lot of hassle. While this ultra-close approach might not be my first choice for miking a solo cajon in the studio, I could certainly see a use for it in a session where you're recording a cajon in conjunction with other instruments and you want to keep bleed to a minimum. To cap it all off, the system is very reasonably priced, retailing for $268. The mount alone goes for $19, and LP also makes a similar but larger mount to be used with a Shure Beta 91, which lists for $25.



MOON MICS

DK27 Sub-Frequency Microphone

by Michael Dawson

The Moon Mic is a new take on an old studio trick where engineers cross-wire a studio speaker so it can be used as a large-diaphragm microphone to capture the ultra-low frequencies emitting from kick drums. Inside the Moon Mic's "chrome cap" housing, which is designed to diffuse unwanted background noise, there's an 8" diaphragm. This diaphragm is $1^1/_2$" larger than the one used in Yamaha's popular Subkick.

The Moon Mic also comes with an inverter switch on the outside of the cap, which allows you to reverse the polarity of the mic quickly and easily if you find the Moon Mic capturing sound waves that are out of phase with those captured by other microphones. And the company offers a few mounting options. You can purchase the mic with a Pearl tom mount and short stand ($549.99), which makes it very easy to position the Moon Mic at the sweet spot of the front kick drum head—approximately $1^1/_2$" from the surface and about a third to halfway from the rim to the center of the drum. Other mounting options include a Gibraltar L-arm (DK27-G) or a Yamaha Hex Rod mount (DK27-Y), and a $^7/_8$" to $^5/_8$" adaptor that will fit most standard mic stands ($16.95).

We brought Grammy-winning engineer Butch Jones into our studio to test the Moon Mic. "The best placement I found for the Moon Mic," Jones says, "was midway between the center and edge of the kick drum and about two fingers' width back from the head. There, the recorded signal had a pleasing sub-tone resonance that wasn't as heavy as some of the other subs I've worked with, and the mic captured more of the true pitch and character of the drum. Obviously, the usefulness of this more accurate sound ultimately depends on how well the kick is tuned."

The basic Moon Mic, without a stand, lists for $449.99.

moonmics.com

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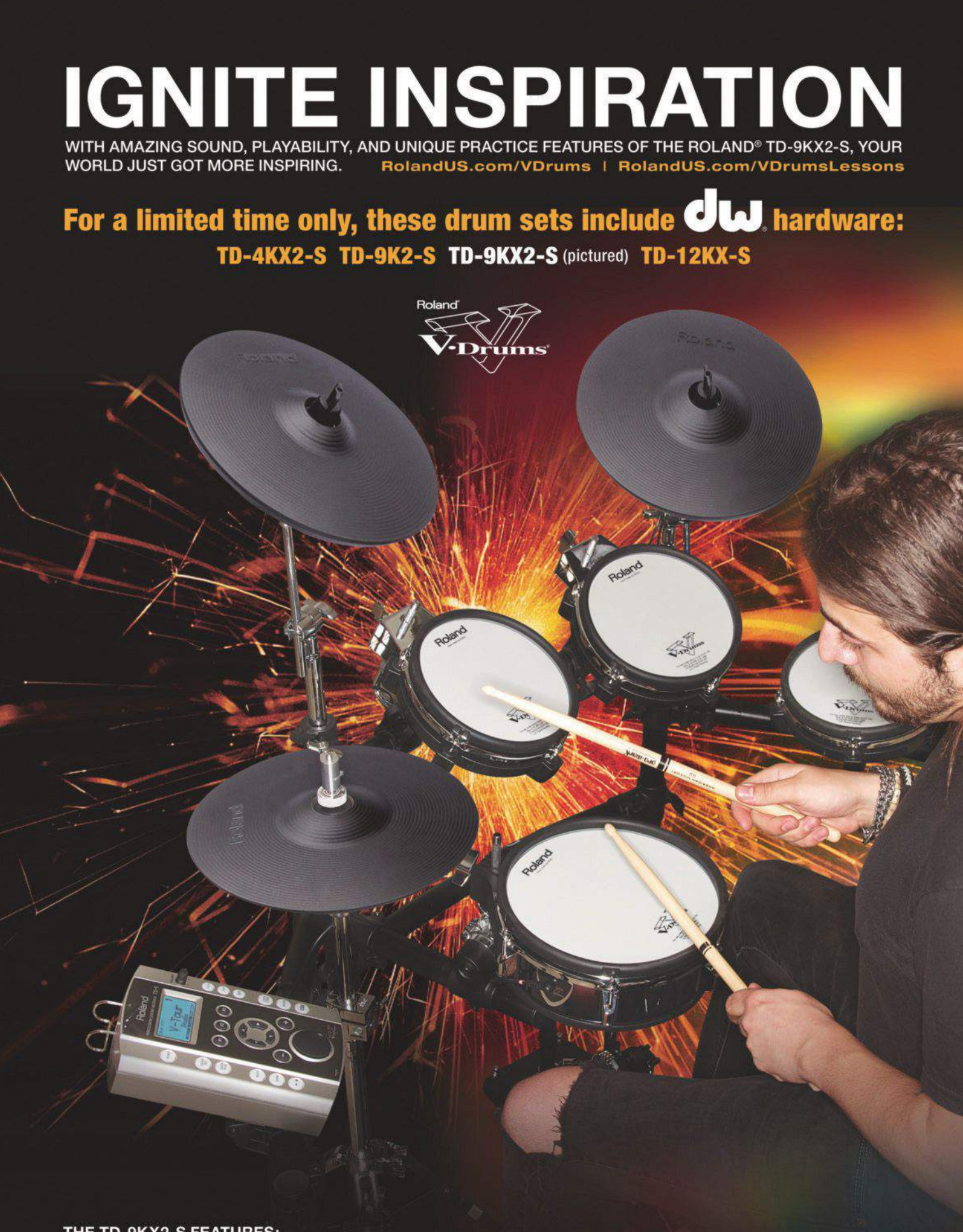

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A DIFFERENT VIEW

The engineer, producer, and bandleader has helped usher in some of the most pristinely recorded drum tracks in history. **Notes from a distinguished career behind the glass and at the top of the charts.**

Alan Parsons

by Will Romano

As a staff engineer at EMI's Abbey Road Studios in the late 1960s and the 1970s, Alan Parsons helped to construct musical masterpieces by Pink Floyd, the Beatles, Jeff Beck, Roy Wood, the Hollies, Pilot, and Al Stewart. In 1975, the engineer/producer formed the Alan Parsons Project with songwriter and one-time manager Eric Woolfson. The duo tapped a stable of session musicians with the express purpose of focusing on composition and production quality. In the process they hit pay dirt with a string of gold and platinum records, including *I Robot*, *Pyramid*, *Eve*, *The Turn of a Friendly Card*, *Eye in the Sky*, and *Ammonia Avenue*, which feature FM staples such as "I Wouldn't Want to Be Like You," "Eye in the Sky," "Games People Play," and "Don't Answer Me."

Today Parsons' status as a musical icon continues to grow. The instrumental "Sirius," from 1982's *Eye in the Sky*, was sampled by P. Diddy for his 2001 record, *The Saga Continues…*, and has been pumped through arena sound systems at sporting events across the country. The Project was named checked by Dr. Evil in the 1999 movie *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*. And in recent years Parsons and his band have toured the world—something he didn't even do back in the '70s and '80s. Parsons' latest CD/DVD, *Eye 2 Eye: Live in Madrid*, was recorded in 2004 at the Plaza Mayor in the Spanish capital, before 16,000 enthusiastic fans.

Though albums by the Alan Parsons Project are notable for the breadth of styles they represent, one constant throughout Parsons' career is an unwavering attention to sonic detail. "Alan raised the level of the music through his unparalleled technical ability," Woolfson said in a 2009 interview, months before his untimely death. "By enhancing the sound, creating certain sensations, he improved the songs."

In addition to capturing rousing, large-as-life orchestral passages—arranged by Andrew Powell—and moving vocal performances, Parsons worked his studio magic on the drumkit. "I recorded with Alan in the late '80s," says veteran drummer Simon Phillips, who engineered a recent session for Parsons' solo material. "I can tell you that the drum sound he achieved had great dimension."

On Parsons productions the cymbals sizzle and sparkle in the high end, bass drums pound with meaty thuds, and snares crack like the taut snap of a whip or a tightly gated spritz from an aerosol spray can. "I worked with an awful lot of drummers in the '70s and '80s," Parsons says matter-of-factly, "and just about any drummer who was anybody came through Abbey Road at one time or another. So I amassed considerable experience in recording drums."

"Initially I thought that the Alan Parsons Project's music was robotic," says Trans-Siberian Orchestra drummer Steve Murphy, who worked live with Parsons between 2003 and 2009. "I've come to realize there's a human quality to the drum tracks, though. The incredible sound of the drums also kept me locked in. I found I couldn't listen loud enough to the Alan Parsons Project songs, because of the way the drums were recorded, the

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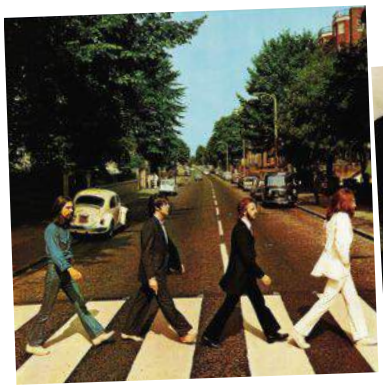
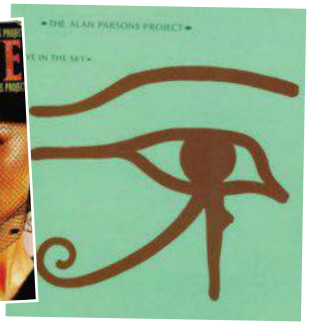




groove Stuart Elliott was playing, how he deviated ever so slightly from that groove, and how perfectly everything fit in the mix. Every night on stage I tried to emulate the snare tunings Stuart used for the studio version of the songs."

"Alan really knows his music," says current Parsons touring drummer Danny Thompson, who's also worked with Scott Weiland and the Mother Truckers. "He'll know what the kick pattern is and what fills should be played. In preparing for the gig, I did more listening than I normally would. I made sure I didn't overplay anything. Alan is looking for a drummer who plays in the pocket. That's his main thing, along with making sure that everyone is able to sing lead vocals, which I do. I have to say the gig is pretty demanding but also very fun."

Alan Parsons was on the road in Europe when he spoke with us via phone from the Corinthia Hotel in Prague.

MD: There's always been the perception that the Alan Parsons Project's music was robotic, perhaps because of the use of instrumentation such as the LinnDrum and Fairlight synth—even to the point that critics called you the aural equivalent of science fiction movies like *Star Wars* and *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

Alan: It was funny how we were considered electronica back in the 1970s, relying heavily on synthesizers. But it really wasn't the case. For the first two albums I almost avoided synths in favor of orchestration and guitar textures. So it was really odd that I got the title of an electronic synth wizard. Over the years I've even steered clear of electronic drums, although I did go through the Simmons period with *Stereotomy* around 1985. I suppose the Simmons-enhanced snare drum was a component of everybody's sound back then, anyway, wasn't it?

MD: Tell us the tale of the two Stuarts, Stuart Tosh and Stuart Elliott, who handled the bulk of the drum duties on the APP albums throughout the '70s and '80s. What were some of their differences?

Alan: I've always loved Stuart Tosh's taste in drum fills. I also think Stuart Tosh was perhaps more ready to take risks, whereas Stuart Elliott took more of a lab technician view of drumming and wanted to put everything in its proper place. He was very exacting. We would sometimes punch in one bar of a drum track, because he thought it was important to get his part as perfect as possible. He was a little more analytical, whereas Stuart Tosh might say, "It sounds good to me," you know? Slightly different attitudes.

MD: You famously engineered Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon*. What kind of drummer was Nick Mason, and what did he bring to Floyd's music?

Alan: I think Nick will forgive me for saying that he's not the world's greatest drummer. He was the right drummer for Pink Floyd. His approach perfectly fit the music and his ability. He was not flashy at all. David Gilmour was certainly flashier, in my opinion, in his approach to guitar playing. But, then again, as with Nick, what David was playing seemed right for the songs.

MD: Did you, and do you still, have a general approach to recording drums?

Alan: If you're speaking about mic techniques, I would say so, yes. I've established a set of rules that I've used for most [recording projects].

MD: Please describe.

Alan: I'd have a dynamic mic on the kick drum, usually an AKG. I would usually use a Neumann condenser on the snare drum. Then I'd use ribbon mics for the overheads. There is no real difference between how I was recording drums in '72 and how I'm recording them now.

MD: Why were you using those mics and those techniques in the first place?

Alan: It was just what I'd learned from other engineers. I always got good results. If I made a change and it didn't work, I went back to the established set of rules.

MD: What makes a good drummer?

Alan: It's a combination of the ability to keep great time and to play ahead [of the beat] or as laid-back as necessary to make the track feel good. The requisite skill sets of a drummer have changed over the years, though. It's a modern requirement for a drummer to be absolutely spot-on with a click. That didn't used to be the case. In earlier years, what was important was that he could hold down a tempo and make it feel right, whereas now the requirement is to be spot-bollock in time.

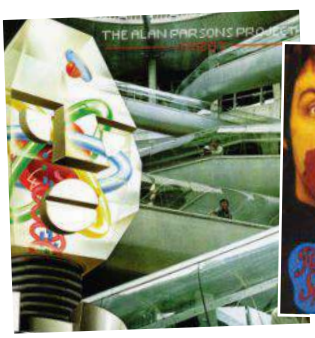
MD: There's something to be said about allowing a drummer some leeway or a personal signature in order to add something to the music.

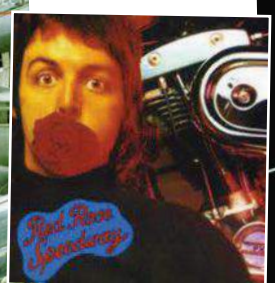
Alan: Yeah, but I think the click track is a necessary evil in recording. It's not just to keep the tempo steady. It goes beyond that. You can't realistically use sequencers without them.

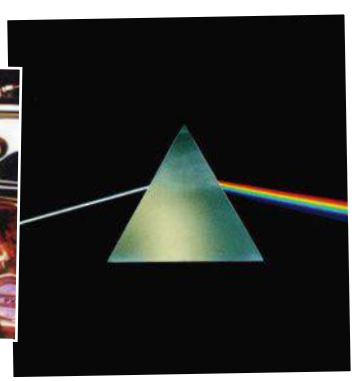
I did some recording recently with Simon Phillips. We had a four-piece band all playing at once, and the band could not agree on which was the best take. Simon said, "I like my [performance] on take three," and everybody else said, "Well, I like what I did on take four." Because we had recorded to a click, Simon was able to use his take three. That's something that would not have been possible in the old days of linear recording.

MD: The importance of timekeeping…

Alan: Yet it's not just about timekeeping either. It's about sound. If a drummer has a crappy snare drum and cheap cymbals… Character is also important, as is the ability to work with the people you're surrounded with. For me, all musicianship is 90 percent character and 10 percent ability. You can't expect to be a working drummer if you can't get on with people. But that goes for any profession, doesn't it? It's particularly true of record production.







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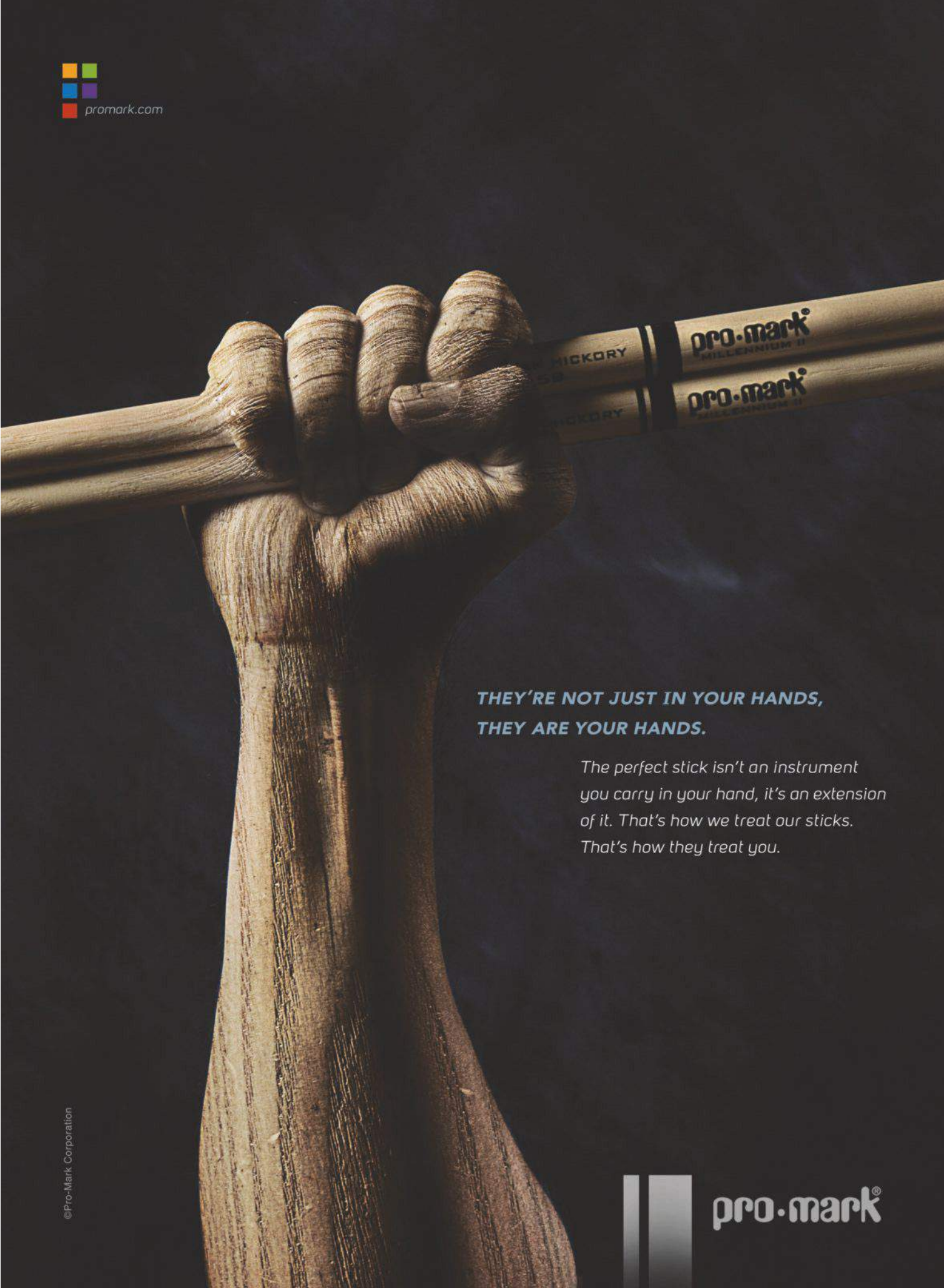

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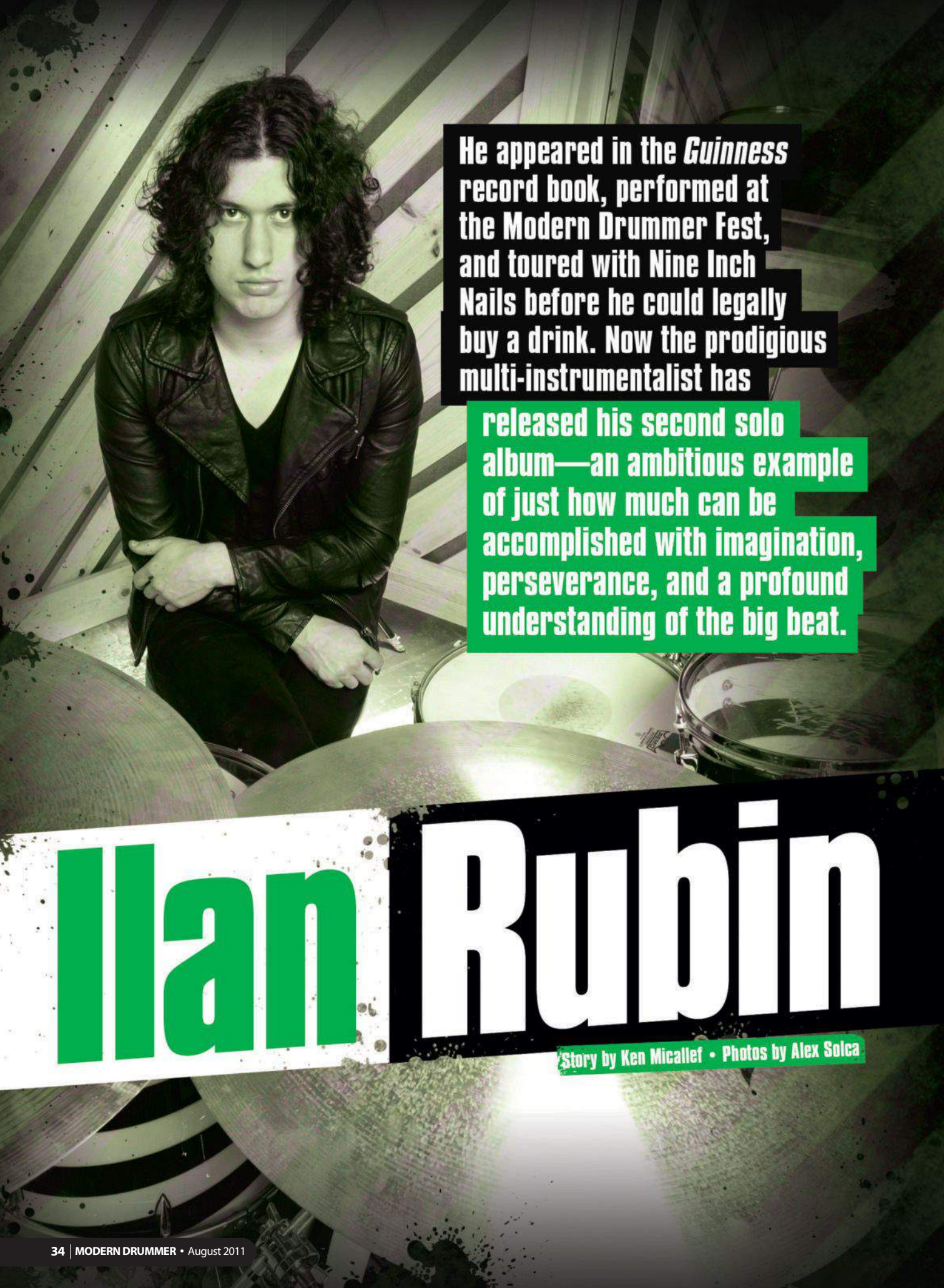


He appeared in the *Guinness* record book, performed at the Modern Drummer Fest, and toured with Nine Inch Nails before he could legally buy a drink. Now the prodigious multi-instrumentalist has released his second solo album—an ambitious example of just how much can be accomplished with imagination, perseverance, and a profound understanding of the big beat.

Ilan Rubin

Story by Ken Micallef • Photos by Alex Solca

"I am constantly testing myself. I don't want to be stumped."

Twenty-three-year-old Ilan Rubin is living the rock drummer's dream. At the age of eleven he was listed by the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the youngest musician ever to perform at Woodstock (which he did with his band F.o.N.). That year he also won *Modern Drummer*'s Undiscovered Drummer Contest in the under-eighteen category and was invited to play at the magazine's Festival in 2000. By the time he was fifteen, Ilan was in Denver Harbor, a band with a major-label record deal. At sixteen, after finishing high school a year early, he hit the road with the Welsh rockers Lostprophets. And on his twenty-first birthday Rubin performed on drums and keyboards with Nine Inch Nails, in front of 5,000 Parisian fans.

Rubin is a bona fide multi-instrumentalist (including classical piano), which can be heard on *Speak Through the White Noise*, his second album as the one-man band the New Regime. An ambidextrous drummer who plays left-hand hi-hat on a right-handed kit, Rubin is also a master of all things John Bonham. Many drummers claim Bonzo as an influence, but Rubin has internalized the Led Zeppelin powerhouse's titanic bottom-end style, feather-stomp touch, and expansive time feel as well as anyone in recent memory.

In the video for the New Regime track "Remission of Guilt," Rubin enters the studio and lays down a savage drumbeat. One by one, seven Ilan Rubins appear in the video, singing and playing various keyboards and guitars. After all, why just give the drummer "some" when he can handle everything? *MD* recently spoke with the super-industrious musician as he was preparing to take his latest opus on the road.

MD: What happened on your twenty-first birthday?

Ilan: I was playing a Nine Inch Nails show in Paris. It was the usual spot in the set where Trent [Reznor] would introduce the band members. While I was sitting behind the drums listening to him, to my surprise two strippers surrounded me. I was caught completely off guard. I didn't even see them. It was pretty awkward for twenty seconds, then they dropped a cake on my head. Immediately after that Trent signaled the next song, "Physical," so I was forced to play covered in melting chocolate frosting. It was difficult but a good time. I was completely surprised.

MD: You're a big fan of classic rock. What about John Bonham in particular strikes you?

Ilan: His feel is obviously fantastic. He

would overplay from time to time live, but on recordings his drumming was perfect for the song. His feel was very identifiable, but what also set him apart was how good his drums sounded, the way he tuned—you could pick out his drums from their sound alone. Bonham's sound and feel in the context of Led Zeppelin's music were perfect. He's been my favorite drummer since I was seven. I've learned all the facets of his playing and adapted them in some way to what I do. Without directly copying him, I've torn all of Zeppelin's music apart, and it's become part of the way I play as a drummer.

MD: Your father was a drummer, and you did your share of studying. How did you apply yourself at such a young age?

Ilan: I definitely studied *Stick Control* and Jim Chapin's *Advanced Techniques for the Modern Drummer*. But drums really lend themselves to learning by ear. Within four years of getting started I went through the Led Zeppelin and Police catalogs and learned a lot by listening.

MD: Did you play along with Zeppelin records and dissect Bonham's drumming?

Ilan: I didn't spend a lot of time playing to the records. I would listen to them or watch *The Song Remains the Same* 500 times. I'd catch something I enjoyed and run into the garage and play it over and over again until I felt I had it, and then I would jam around with it. Like the bass drum triplets in "Good Times Bad Times"—instead of learning that one measure, I would play it, then turn it inside out, then break it up and do my own variation and jam around it. That's when you really gain an understanding of a part, when you can take it apart and make it your own. Then you understand how to incorporate it in different places within your drumming.

MD: Did you do that with other Bonham signatures?

Ilan: Sure, his triplet fills around the set, another important Bonham signature. I did tear "Moby Dick" apart, but that's not my favorite thing. I love his drumming within the songs. My favorite beat of all time is "The Crunge" from *Houses of the Holy*. I've never used it, though. It's a very distinct beat, and it's not something you can easily take apart and use elsewhere.

MD: When you were in your formative drumming years, did you spend hours practicing?

Ilan: I did spend a lot of time playing, but I wasn't one to sit there for hours consecutively. I would play for thirty minutes, do something else, then come back and play for an hour. I think it's a good approach because it keeps your brain fresh. Rather than becoming frustrated with something and beating a dead horse, go elsewhere, clear your mind, come back, and play it again.

MD: When did you begin studying the drums?

Ilan: When I was around eleven. I learned all the rudiments. A year later I started studying with Travis Barker, who really focused on the importance of reading. We went through *A Funky Primer*, *Stick Control*, Jim Chapin's book, and other snare drum studies. Travis was very into making sure that rudiments like flam taps looked as proper as they sounded. He made sure I executed the rudiments properly. I took eleven lessons with Travis over a couple years. At that point he was getting really big with Blink-182, so I would do a lesson, then five months later two more lessons.

MD: Was this around the time you entered the *MD* competition?

Ilan: Yes. I filmed a drum solo with the band I was in then and sent it in. Later we got a call that I had won, and I was offered to play the Festival that year. I don't remember the solo exactly, but the video where Tony Royster Jr. plays at the Festival was very popular then. He was twelve, and I remember setting that as a goal for myself, to play at the MD Festival by the time I was twelve, and I happened to reach that goal. I was very proud of that.

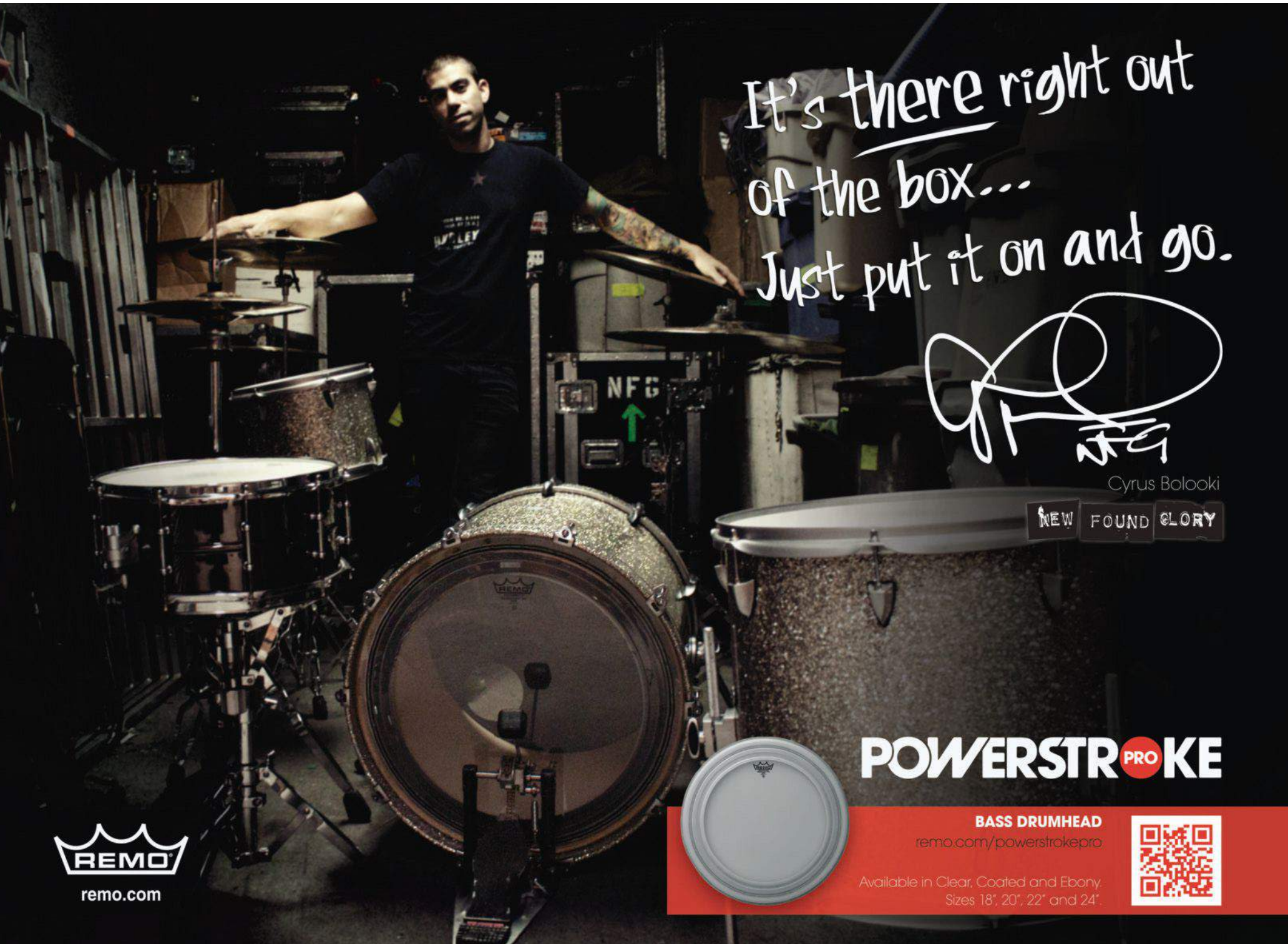
MD: Do you remember the experience?

Ilan: It was more thought-out than what I did on my tape. My solo was seven minutes long, though I have no idea what I could have done for that long. It was written out in that I knew what I wanted to do for each section, but there was still a layer of improvisation. I was happy with my performance, from what I recall.

MD: How did you get the gig with Trent Reznor?

Ilan: I was playing with Lostprophets at the time. A friend who worked at OCDP and had built my drums had been teching for Josh Freese and NIN. Lostprophets was opening for NIN at the Reading and Leeds Festivals in England in 2007. He told Trent to check me out, and I guess Trent watched me with Lostprophets that night. A year later, when Josh Freese announced he was leaving, I got an email from Trent asking if I was interested, and of course I was.

"Letting You" was one of the NIN songs popular with drummers—it was really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RECORDINGS

F.o.N. Freak of Nature, Hooked on FoNIX, Cease and Desist: The EP Formerly Known as "FoNOPOLY" /// **Denver Harbor** Scenic /// **Reik** Secuencia /// **Nikki Clan** No Será Igual /// **Allison** Memorama /// **The New Regime** Coup, Speak Through the White Noise

INFLUENCES

Led Zeppelin I, II, III, IV, Houses of the Holy, Physical Graffiti, Presence (John Bonham) /// **The Police** Live! (Stewart Copeland) /// **Dave Brubeck Quartet** At Carnegie Hall (Joe Morello)

technical, with fast 16ths on the hi-hat—so I knew that would be important for me to play. I sent Trent a tape of me playing "March of the Pigs" and "Letting You." He asked me to audition during the Lights in the Sky tour. I auditioned during sound-check and got the gig.

MD: You had to learn fifty-five songs within a month and a half, right?

Ilan: Yes. My process was listening to the songs repeatedly. I do all of my learning by listening, not by playing. It's important to have the beats in those songs nailed and locked down, but also the structures. Another aspect of learning lots of material in a short period of time is knowing the song titles, as dumb as it sounds. There are fifty-five song titles, and knowing which one is the right one at that second is very important. By the end of the tour it was closer to seventy songs.

MD: Did you create drum charts?

Ilan: I only wrote out a chart for one song, "Demon Seed." The pattern is very cut up; it doesn't sound human. I wrote out a three-page chart for the song, note for note. We played it once. Trent laughed because I nailed it, but he didn't want to play it live anymore.

MD: How did you remember all those songs?

Ilan: I just stuck them in my brain, and they stayed there. I don't have a regimen, I just get in there and refresh. I am constantly testing myself. I don't want to be stumped. Say I'm playing the first verse of a song. I visualize how the bridge will be played and how the song ends long before those parts occur, just so I know exactly what's coming next. When you test yourself that way it gives you confidence. Every song has its own character,

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2. 21" A Sweet ride (used as crash)
3. 24" A Medium ride
4. 21" K Crash Ride

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and you have to get that song and keep it in your brain. I do visualize the structure of the song, but it's not notes.

MD: You play left-hand hi-hat. So, are you right- or left-handed?

Ilan: I ride the hi-hat and write with my left hand, but I throw a ball with my right hand. As a drummer, I'm stronger left-handed, but I play a right-handed ride cymbal. When I began playing it didn't make sense to have my right hand over my left, because my left was closer to the hi-hat. But some things were easier to learn right-handed. So I learned both ways. I kick with my right foot.

MD: In the New Regime's video for "Remission of Guilt," you play all the instruments. Your left elbow has a serious rocking motion on the hi-hat. What does that give you?

Ilan: Over the years I developed a motion on the hi-hat that works for me. I suppose there's an element of performance in there too, from playing so many shows. You have to exude so much power that it becomes part of the way you play.

MD: What advice can you give to drummers who want to play left-hand lead on the hi-hat?

Ilan: It's really about doing it enough that you're comfortable with it. You don't want to have to think about it. That could be a horrendous mistake. So play the same thing over and over to the point where you're comfortable, then experiment. Find where your left hand is comfortable in its new role, and then you can do other things without having to think about it.

MD: What's the biggest ingredient in achieving success at such a young age?

Ilan: It may sound crappy, but aside from skill or talent, it's my work ethic. You have incredible musicians who haven't accomplished anything for whatever reason, but they are still incredible musicians. If you achieve a degree of success without a real work ethic, it won't be long lived. So work ethic, skills, and luck are always a factor. You have to be smart and know what's going on around you. If you do achieve success, you don't want to be the guy who's doing well without a penny to his name. But really it's about doing what's required without complaining about it. Making goals, reaching those goals, making new goals. And constantly progressing and moving forward. I am constantly working toward what I want to achieve. I'm a workaholic.

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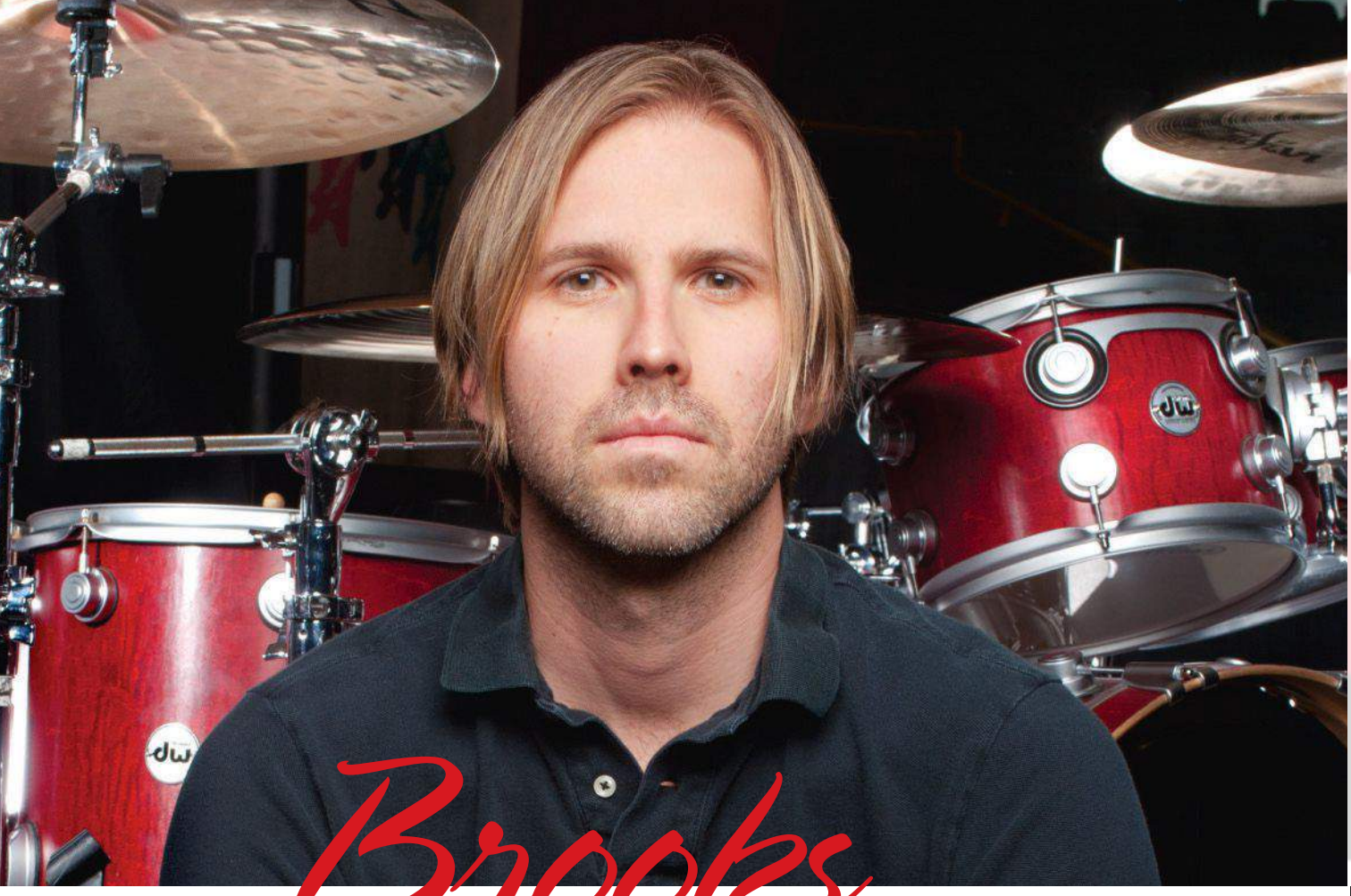


Brooks WACKE

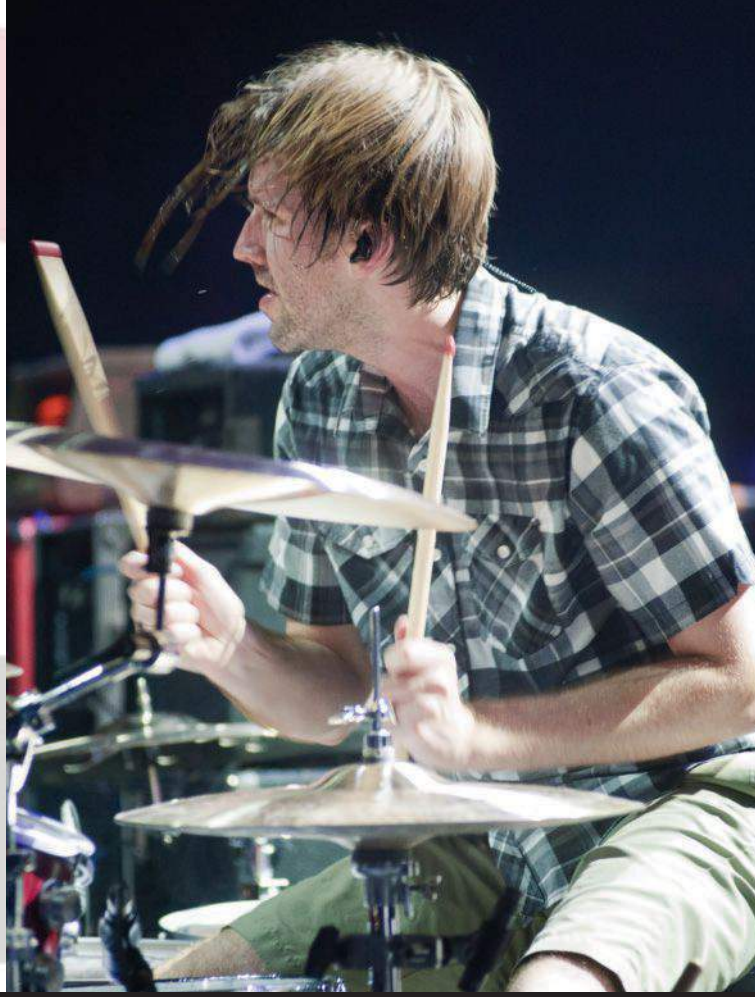
He initially caught our attention twenty years ago as the precocious youngest member of the Wackerman musical dynasty. Now, after having served **Infectious Grooves**, **the Vandals**, **Suicidal Tendencies**, **Tenacious D**, and **Korn** with honor, he's celebrating a decade of bringing rare refinement to the pioneering punk of **Bad Religion**.

Story by Ken Micallef
Photos by Alex Solca

Looking for rock drumming royalty? Thirty-four-year-old Brooks Wackerman certainly fits the bill. Brooks hails from a musical family whose skills extend beyond rock's borders and whose collective résumé includes stints with Frank Zappa, Allan Holdsworth, and Steve Vai (brother Chad); Maynard Ferguson and Henry Mancini (bassist brother Bob); and the Bill Watrous Big Band, Kazumi Watanabe, and Lindsey Buckingham (brother John). Brooks is an academically proficient drummer, having studied, like his brothers, with the famous L.A. instructors Murray Spivack (who played drums and created sound effects for the original *King Kong*, among other films) and Chuck Flores. Closing the musical family circle, Brooks's dad, Chuck, is a renowned educator in the California school system, a veteran band director of forty-five years.

But when it came time for Brooks Wackerman to make his way in the world, instead of venturing down a similar path to that of his brothers, he turned punk.

Wackerman was a pro by age thirteen, playing with the teen metal phenoms Bad4Good. Soon after, the drummer joined Infectious Grooves, which he calls "the first hybrid metal-funk band." In 1997 Wackerman began banging skulls with the hardcore thrashers Suicidal Tendencies, and a couple years later he started sharing drum duties with his pal Josh Freese in the stalwart punk band the Vandals. A love of all things punk deepened into an obsession, and Brooks was enlisted by reigning icons Bad Religion for the band's 2002 album, *The Process of Belief*, and has been playing with the group ever since, including on its latest release, 2010's *The Dissent of Man*.



RMAN

Between world tours and recordings with Bad Religion, Wackerman has found time for numerous side projects, including recording and performing as Colonel Sanders with the goofball rockers Tenacious D, cutting tracks with Korn and Avril Lavigne, and creating soundtracks with the film composers Atticus Ross and Danny Elfman. A multitalented musician, Wackerman gets to spread his wings even further with his band Kidneys, for which he sings, plays guitar, and writes.

But it's in Bad Religion where Brooks reveals his pure punk predilection. Playing with economy and craft, using his double kick pedal to propel the band's scorching songs, Wackerman turns punk drumming into art. Though he could easily execute a drum-centric display of odd note groupings,

twisted time conundrums, and storm-the-gates assaults (as seen in his many online videos), he turns his absorption of the playing of Terry Bozzio, Tommy Aldridge, and Josh Freese into a mature punk template. Sure, he kicks butt: On *The Dissent of Man*, check out his full frontal pummel on "The Day That the Earth Stalled," manic two-beat grind on "Only Rain," chest-thumping grandiosity on "Won't Somebody," manic double time on "Wrong Way Kids," and tom-pounding militarism on "The Devil in Stitches." Distilling elements of classic punk and executing his art with clarity, precision, and power, Wackerman sets a standard not only for punk drummers but for all types of players.

Modern Drummer caught up with Brooks on the day of a Bad Religion show at Seattle's WaMu Theater, between his daily yoga stretches and faithful warm-up routine. The drummer required a fast-food fix, so time was tight. Catch this punk quick—he's got no time to waste.

"It's still a challenge to find a happy medium between being a technical drummer and serving the song as a groove drummer."

MD: You're from a famous drumming family, you studied with Murray Spivack and Chuck Flores—you even went to Zappa rehearsals as a kid. That's quite a contrast to your role as the drummer in Bad Religion.

Brooks: A lot of people aren't aware of the stamina required for punk rock drumming. What I learned from Murray and Chuck was how to play for an hour and a half without tensing up, without getting arthritis or tendinitis. I've seen guys that grip the sticks too tightly, and they're not able to get through a set. I've been fortunate to learn from these masters how to play with stamina and articulation, and hopefully that translates through the speakers.

MD: You've seen the harmful effects of bad technique.

Brooks: There's a vast number of

RECORDINGS

Bad Religion The Process of Belief, The Empire Strikes First, New Maps of Hell, The Dissent of Man /// **Infectious Grooves** Groove Family Cyco /// **Suicidal Tendencies** Freedumb, Free Your Soul…Save My Mind /// **Tenacious D** The Complete Master Works 2 (DVD) /// **The Vandals** Look What I Almost Stepped In… /// **Korn** Korn (2007)

INFLUENCES

Missing Persons Spring Session M (Terry Bozzio) /// **Frank Zappa** The Best Band You Never Heard in Your Life (Chad Wackerman) /// **Tool** Lateralus (Danny Carey) /// **The Vandals** Internet Dating Superstuds (Josh Freese) /// **Meshuggah** ObZen (Tomas Haake) /// **Nirvana** Nevermind (Dave Grohl) /// **Queens of the Stone Age** Songs for the Deaf (Dave Grohl, Gene Trautmann) /// **Fiona Apple** When the Pawn… (Matt Chamberlain) /// **The Mars Volta** De-Loused in the Comatorium (Jon Theodore), The Bedlam in Goliath (Thomas Pridgen) /// Plus anything with Tony Williams or Stewart Copeland

drummers who have never studied, but that doesn't mean that none of them are great drummers. Some of my favorite guys are self-taught. But I do have drummers ask me about my technique and say they've never seen a punk drummer using the Murray Spivack method.

MD: But many guys who have studied legit wouldn't want to play in a punk band.

Brooks: I love punk music, but I also love Frank Zappa. That's due to being exposed to different styles of music growing up. I originally studied jazz. My father is a jazz educator and a drummer; he was my jazz band teacher growing up in junior high and high school in Los Alamitos.

MD: When did you attend Zappa rehearsals?

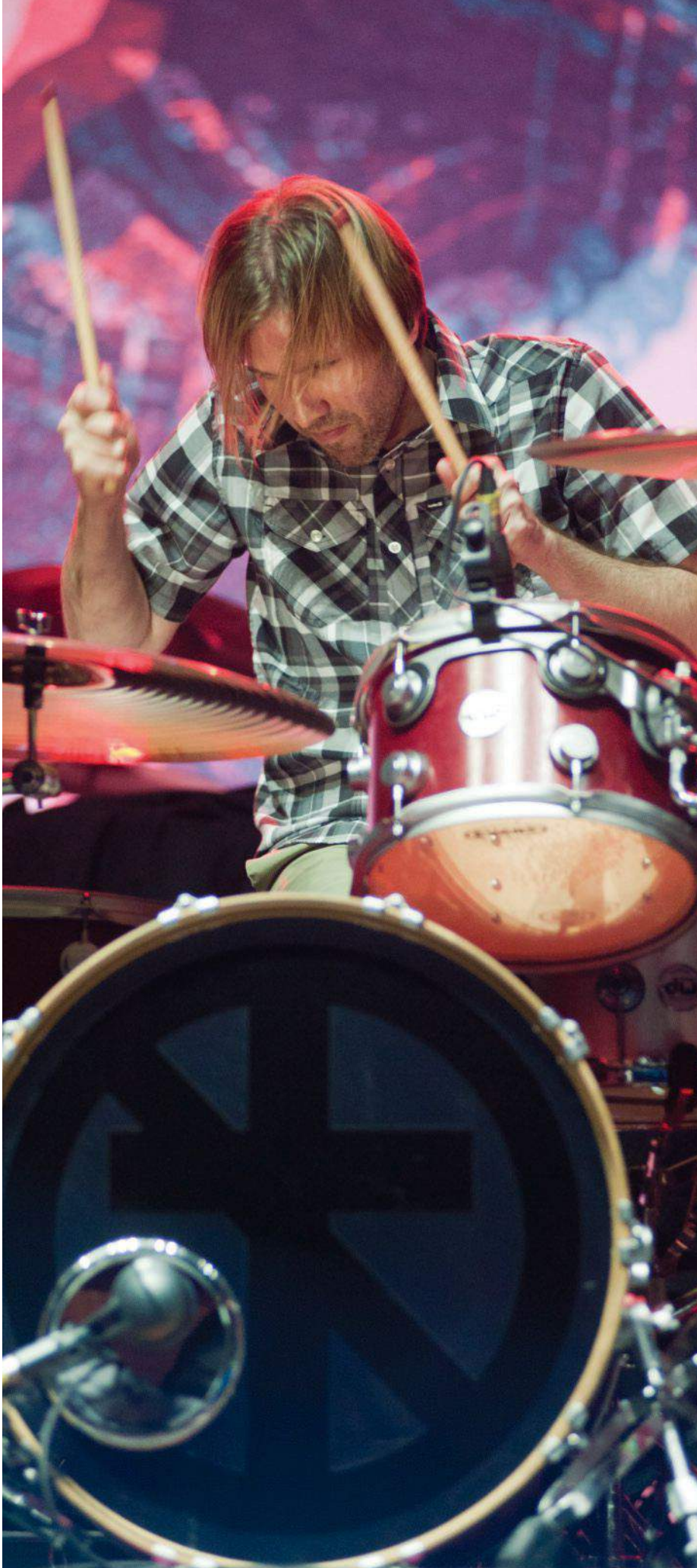
Brooks: I was seven years old. Zappa used to rehearse at Raleigh Studios on Melrose in Los Angeles. When my brother Chad was playing drums with him, my parents would take me. I was into glam metal then, and I would show up with a jean jacket covered in Poison and Mötley Crüe patches. The band thought it was funny that Chad's little brother was a glam dude. But I could play.

Frank once asked if I would sit in with the band. I remember [bassist] Scott Thunes played a reggae riff, and I played my interpretation of a reggae beat. That was my first professional experience. Zappa was entertained by how young I was. Afterwards he said, "Good job, kid." It's insane, if you think about it. I didn't realize the depths of Frank Zappa's music then. Later on, when I was in junior high school, I really got into Zappa. I still have more Zappa CDs than Chad does! Without that experience I would be a different drummer now.

MD: What was Murray Spivack's method?

Brooks: It was similar to the Moeller technique but slightly different, very scientific. He taught me how to play loose but with control. He always encouraged me to find my own style. I studied with Murray every couple weeks for seven years, and he knew if you hadn't practiced just by what shape your hands were in.

I'm a huge Jojo Mayer fan; when he explains Moeller on his DVD, it reminds me of Murray to some extent. It's hard to cite the exact similarities, but the whipping motion is similar; it's a very loose motion. The up-and-down motion was a big thing with Murray. And I studied with Chuck Flores for five years on drumset. I took



BROOKS'S SETUP

Drums: DW VLT Maple Collector's series in stained candy apple red finish with satin chrome hardware

A. 6½x14 DW aluminum snare (alternates include a matching 5½x14 candy apple red maple and a 5½x14 Craviotto Diamond series nickel-over-brass)
B. 7x10 tom
C. 8x12 tom
D. 14x16 floor tom
E. 12x14 floor tom
F. 18x22 bass drum

Heads: Evans coated ST snare batter and Hazy 300 bottom, clear EC2 SST tom batters, clear G1 rack tom bottoms, EC Resonant floor tom bottoms, and clear EQ4 bass drum batter

Cymbals: Zildjian
1. 18" hi-hats (K Constantinople crash on top and A Breakbeat ride on bottom)
2. 20" Oriental China Trash
3. 18" K Custom Session crash
4. 22" A Custom ride
5. 22" K Light ride
6. 20" A Custom EFX crash

Hardware: DW 9000 series, including double bass drum pedal, two-leg hi-hat stand, straight/boom cymbal stands, double tom holder with straight/boom attachment, and round Air Lift throne

Sticks: Zildjian Brooks Wackerman Artist series model

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lessons with both Chuck and Murray during junior high. I really wanted to better myself as a drummer.

A defining moment was when I got into punk rock. My first band, Bad4Good, released the record *Refugee* in 1992, when I was thirteen, and it was like AC/DC. Then I saw Josh Freese play with Dweezil Zappa at the NAMM show, and I was blown away by his precision. That really inspired me to practice more.

MD: But Dweezil Zappa isn't punk.

Brooks: Yes, but then I saw Josh play with the Vandals. I thought, *What is this music?* That was my introduction to punk. Then I discovered the Ramones, Bad Religion…and now I'm in Bad Religion. After listening to punk records I realized I didn't have to be so flamboyant—I didn't need to play a fill after every bar. The groove is supreme. It was an eye-opening experience, and it's still a challenge to find a happy medium between being a technical drummer and serving the song as a groove drummer.

Too Legit to Punk?

MD: How does your more formal training help you play punk?

Brooks: My studies help me with options for what I want to play. I don't always want to play a 2-and-4 pattern in Bad Religion, so I open my bag of tricks, maybe play something with an offbeat on the snare or something requiring coordination that a punk drummer wouldn't normally use. It helps me be more creative.

MD: How do you balance the economy of motion of a schooled drummer with the full punk performance assault?

Brooks: I don't even think about it. If I ever look flashy or pretentious up there, I'm not aware of it. I hope I do, because sometimes it looks cool! If I'm having a good show and I feel loose with the sticks flying left and right, that might look better than having my sticks an inch off the drum. But I have never intentionally twirled a stick. Don't hate me for not doing that! [laughs]

MD: Your online solo with Tenacious D is dynamic, precise, flashy, clear, and powerful. Do your control and propulsion come from your wrists or your forearms?

Brooks: Ninety percent of my technique is from the wrists. If it's more of a sluggish Bonham-like groove, I'll throw more arm into it. When I'm playing a two-beat punk song, though, I'm barely using any arm. It's all wrist. I never studied finger technique. And playing the tempos I do with Bad

Religion, I don't have time to bring my arm up. I would get so fatigued, and it's just not logical.

MD: Is your fulcrum between the thumb and the first joint of your forefinger?

Brooks: My grip is primarily between my thumb, forefinger, and middle finger, and my third and fourth fingers are lightly wrapped around the stick. I wasn't taught to use a really loose grip. Someone like Keith Carlock plays really loose, and that's his feel and style, but my grip is a bit tighter.

MD: Do you keep your head tensions tight? Are you depending on rebound to make the strokes?

Brooks: I'm dictating where the stroke is. I like my toms tuned fairly low. My highest tom is tighter than the rest, just to distinguish the tone, but the rest of the toms are pretty low, without a lot of resonance. Putting Moongel on the tom heads helps bring out the snap and articulation on my fills. For snare hits, I'm always in the center of the head, with a rimshot. And I slant my snare like a jazz player. I'm six-foot-two and I sit real high. I like that hovering-over-the-drums feeling. It gives me better control when I'm at that height. My throne is as high as it can go. Being that high facilitates getting around the drums better. People look at me funny, but that's what feels right to me.

MD: On the DVD that comes with the reissue of Bad Religion's *New Maps of Hell*, you play a great snare and floor tom combination at the end of "I Want to Conquer the World." It sounds like 16th-note doubles between the double bass and your hands. Are there other stickings or groupings that you rely on during those types of crescendos?

Brooks: For punk drumming a lot of staccato-ness and articulation comes

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from single strokes. But there are parts where I can throw in some rolls or ghost strokes leading up to a bigger fill. I do enjoy at times crescendoing into a long drum roll; that makes it sound more musical. A crescendo in punk is kind of an oxymoron. That's why I like it—it brings a new color to the palette. If I'm doing a ride pattern, I might throw a paradiddle in there or different stickings, but most of the time if I want to do a powerful fill it consists of single-stroke rolls.

Kentucky Fried Wackerman

MD: Why did you take on the role of Colonel Sanders with Tenacious D? Do you consume mass quantities of Extra Crispy?

Brooks: Yes! I love chicken! [laughs] Each guy in the band had to be a character who's already dead. There's a point in the show where we all go to hell, and that's when we're introduced. The entire stage turns into a hellish vision, and I'm brought out as Colonel Sanders. I went to hell for killing a billion chickens. I wore a white suit every day for a year on that tour. I had the facial hair, but I refused to wear the wig. They had no idea!

MD: You've said that Tommy Aldridge and Terry Bozzio were big influences on your double bass style.

Brooks: Yes, I watched Tommy's *Hot Licks* video a thousand times when I was in the fifth grade. I was blown away by his precision and execution. Another guy who has taken double bass to completely absurd levels is Tomas Haake of Meshuggah. He blows my mind. I always practice and try to figure out his patterns. For Bozzio, it's Zappa's video *Baby Snakes*, which shows Terry doing a lot of intricate and musical double bass playing. Even some Missing Persons—Chad would take me to their concerts. Bozzio would solo, and his approach to double bass always blew me away.

MD: Did you copy and incorporate their patterns?

Brooks: Yeah, something I always practiced was when Terry would play a pattern on his snare or toms and then mimic the pattern on his kicks—maybe a flam pattern on top, which he'd repeat on double bass. And I would practice solos by Tommy Aldridge, or even Alex Van Halen. I still play the "Hot for Teacher" intro at soundcheck. The guys in the band always think it's funny, but it's *the* most recognizable drum performance, if you ask me.

The Kids Are Alright

MD: What do fans usually ask you after a Bad Religion show?

Brooks: Stamina is always a big issue—how I pace myself and get through a show when we're playing these intense tempos. I always practice to a metronome and take everything slowly. If you pass the threshold of how fast you can go, you'll experience tension in your hands, and that's never good. I always emphasize that when you're practicing something, just take your time and digest it, and then come back to it the next day and be consistent. I also get asked what steps I took to get into the music business and how I became the drummer with Bad Religion.

MD: They probably think, *I can play that, but how do I get the gig?*

Brooks: Right—I can do what you do! My answer is you just have to go out and play with as many people as you can and practice, practice, practice. Figure out what type of voice you want in the music industry—be original. Be inspired by drummers and even non-musicians. Draw inspiration from different sources. My career began at NAMM when I was twelve. I was watching the guitarist for Bad4Good play at the Ibanez booth. I had hair down to my ass, so I looked like a guy that should be playing in a band. His father came up to me and asked if I played an instrument. I said, "I'm a drummer." And he said, "My son has a deal with Interscope and we need a drummer. Can we get together?" If not for that meeting, I might not have been in Infectious Grooves, which is where I met Robert Trujillo, who was their bass player. They rehearsed at the same complex as Bad4Good.

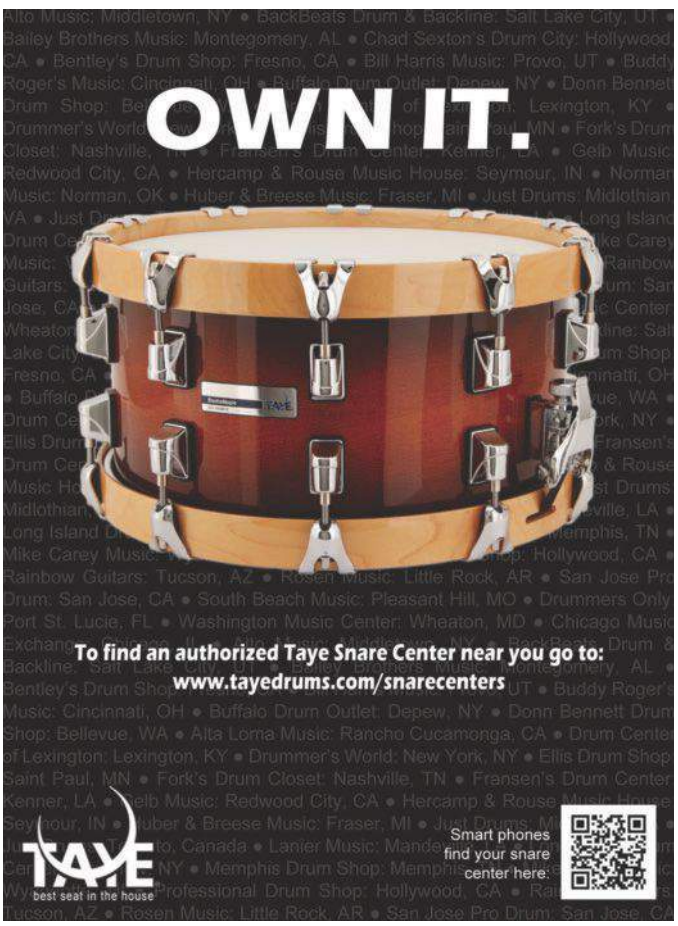
MD: When that moment of luck came, you were ready.

Brooks: Yes. I always stress that you have to do your homework and be prepared when the opportunity arises. Make sure you've practiced enough that you can deal with anything that's thrown at you.

Channeling the Downward Dog

MD: In your four-part Drum Channel video, you're shown during your warm-up routine. It looks like you're doing a combination of rudiments. What are you playing, how long do you play it, and what surface do you normally play it on?

Brooks: In that particular video I was playing on a flight case



at the Las Vegas House of Blues. I normally don't warm up on a flight case. I have a proper pad on a snare stand, but the case was convenient. As far as my regimen, it's up in the air. What you saw is what I do with different variations from Murray Spivack and George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control* and *Accents and Rebounds* books. I do combinations of different exercises. I start really slowly with single strokes and double strokes, then I combine flams and flam taps, pataflaflas—some drum corps stuff I learned from friends. I do that for about twenty minutes. After that I stretch for fifteen minutes so I don't pull any muscles. I do a lot of yoga on tour as well. I try to do it three times a week to keep limber.

MD: Do you favor certain yoga poses?

Brooks: Today I did thirty minutes of yoga, similar to a class that I would take at home. Backstage I don't want to be the guy doing downward-facing dogs and bumping into people, so I do basic stretches for the legs and hands, to get the blood flowing. Trust me, if you join a yoga class you will be the only guy in the room—fifty chicks and you. I recommend it for any single drummers. You *will* meet women! [laughs]

MD: What other poses work for you?

Brooks: There's the sun salutation, a sequence of five different yoga poses. You stand up, then bend down and do a leg stretch, and then you go into plank [position], which is the top of a push-up. You do four pushups, go back into the downward-facing dog, and then repeat. My posture used to be bad—I was really hunched over, and I didn't realize it until I saw videos of myself playing. I don't want to be a forty-year-old hunchback. Yoga has remedied that problem.

Two of Everything

MD: Why do you use a double pedal rather than two bass drums?

Brooks: A couple years ago I went to two bass drums, but it just didn't feel right. I like the sound of two beaters on one head—I like that consistency. I also like that I can position the toms better with a single kick.

MD: Speaking of your toms, why do you use shallower sizes?

Brooks: They just pop more. I like the attack. I used to use power toms, which are deeper than traditional sizes, and they gave me more depth. But especially when I'm doing a fast tom roll, I get more attack with the smaller sizes. My floor toms are normal sizes, though. Another reason I like the shallower depths is that it makes the toms easier to position. With my height, I can lower my toms to a more comfortable position.

MD: Your floor toms are reversed from the typical order.

Brooks: Yes, the 14" is to the right of the 16". When I'm doing tribal parts I like riding on the 16" better than the 14". It gives more depth to the ride pattern. The 14" is more of an accent tom; ending a fill on the 14" as opposed to the 16" gives the listener something new to hear. It pops out. Or if I'm doing a tom build with both hands, one hand will be on the 14" and the other on the 16". Or I'll switch it up to do single strokes between the two.

MD: And why do you play two ride cymbals?

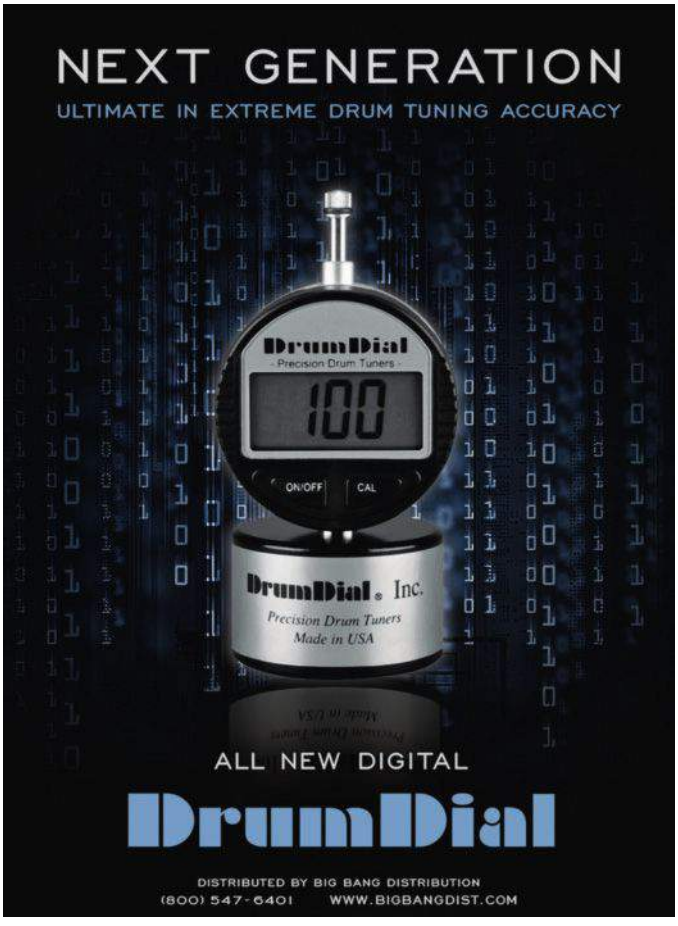
Brooks: I use a 22" A Custom for more of the Stewart Copeland–style bell work, and the 22" K Light ride is more for that bashing, washy sound. There are some Bad Religion songs where I'll play a 16th-note ride pattern and I need more of a stick sound. That's where the A Custom works well. The 22" K is more of a crash/ride. It's nice to go between the two colors. You can get some interesting variety.

MD: You use an 18" Constantinople crash as a top hi-hat and an 18" Breakbeat ride on the bottom. Why do you favor such giant hats?

Brooks: I blame one of my best friends, Ronnie Vannucci of the Killers. When I played the hi-hats on his kit I said, "What the hell are you doing here?" Then I started experimenting with different and bigger sizes. I went from using 14s to using 16" Zildjian Light hats for a year, then I gradually moved up to the 18s. They're the best-sounding hats that *aren't* hats that I've ever used.

MD: It seems like they would overpower the set.

Brooks: It's just the opposite. With cymbals that big you have options to put the stick pretty much anywhere you want, as opposed to a set of 14s, where you're pretty limited as to where you can go. With the 18s you can get a lot of different colors on the top hat. And when you open and choke them, obviously it's more pronounced because of their size. I recorded with them and everyone thought I was from Mars, but the engineer said they sounded great. They look threatening, but as soon as you play them and get their feel—you have to move the hi-hat stand back away from you—they



have a nice dark wash. And the Constantinople has a darker sound to begin with.

MD: Aren't they a lot louder than regular-size hi-hats?

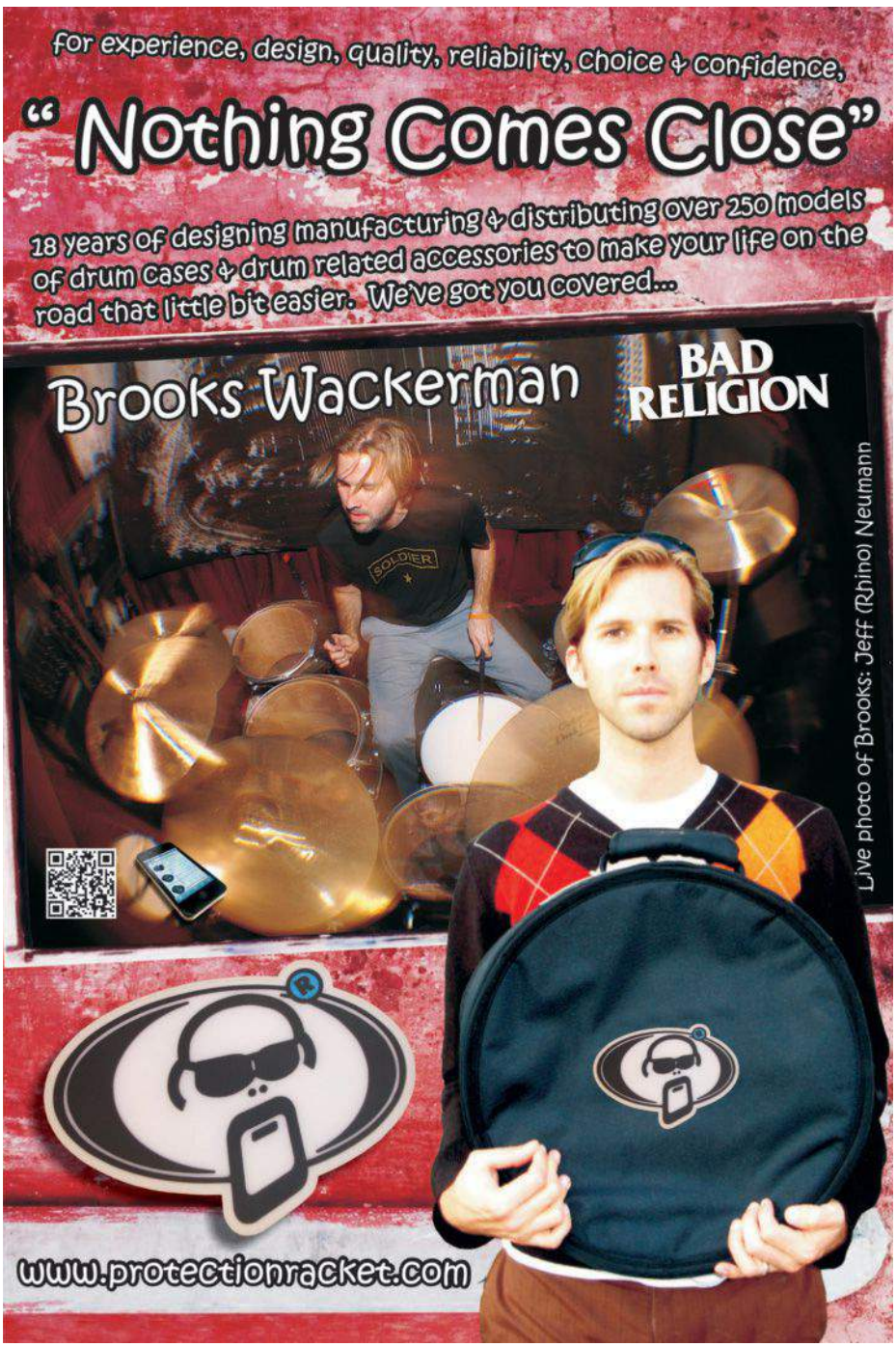
Brooks: Surprisingly, they're not, because of the thinness of the Constantinople.

MD: And you often play the hats about an inch open, but it's not a washy Ringo sound. You keep the clutch tight on the top cymbal, right?

Brooks: Yeah, I like the control when you keep the top hat tight. I never like the clutch that loose. If I'm keeping a ride pattern and quarters on the hat, I want to hear that more, and tightening the clutch gives me that.

MD: Are there gear necessities for a Bad Religion gig?

Brooks: I play a lot of notes on the kick drum, so I pad it pretty well. I use two DW pillows in there, and sometimes I'll add a blanket to get that punchy sound. We're not going for a room sound. Most of my drums are low and punchy. All of the toms have at least one Moongel on the head. Snare-wise, I'm going for something pretty warm and cracky—those words always come up. I also love using an A Custom EFX crash for accents.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Calling Mr. Clean

MD: What do you practice these days?

Brooks: I move between a lot of different ideas. When I hear a drummer that inspires me—for instance, most recently I saw a clip of Chris Coleman, and he takes gospel chops to a whole different level—it gives me new tricks to practice. I still do a page from *Accents and Rebounds*. I go through Johnny Rabb's book *Jungle/Drum 'n' Bass for the Acoustic Drum Set*. When I hear Jojo Mayer or Johnny play, I'm always inspired to come up with variations of what they do. I usually have three or four things I try to hit every week. A lot of it is what Steve Smith calls maintenance practicing. You just want to practice to make sure you don't get too rusty before a tour. Before a tour I'll start playing harder than normal. Otherwise I'll feel it the morning after the first show. It's good to practice at the volume you play live.

MD: How do you maintain your edge and aggression? Does it help to be the youngest guy in Bad Religion?

Brooks: Having the most active role in the band and being ten years younger is not a bad thing physically. I'm a true believer in taking care of yourself. On tour you can easily fall into boredom and develop bad habits, but for me it's all about routine and waking up every day and exercising or reading. I have to be in a routine to maintain my sanity. Aggression and edge have to do with your mindset and how you conduct your day and your tour. I've never had a drug phase, and I've never smoked. My only weakness is fast food. Watch, the next time you talk to me I'll be a drug addict and on some rehab reality show. [laughs] I just shot myself in the foot!

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Guy EVANS

by Will Romano

Van der Graaf Generator released a string of albums in the '70s that are still revered today for their death-defying prog rock proclivities. Driven by its longtime drummer's galvanizing performances, the recently re-formed group is as intense and unpredictable as ever.

Van der Graaf Generator's toxic records should have been slapped with a warning label that read, "May induce madness, convulsions, dizziness, or all three." In the 1970s, the group stood out even among the quirky British progressive acts of the day. Its electrifying music was, and still is, as much the sound of intelligently designed musical interplay as it was the complete and utter obliteration of that concept.

Though the band's nihilistic music lacked the mass appeal of Yes or Genesis, Van der Graaf—which took its name from an invention by Robert Van de Graaff that produces electrical charges—created a style as outlandish and demanding as that of either of those other iconic progressive rock groups. Van der Graaf's sound was gothic, sophisticated, and charged with nightmarish sci-fi revelations, soaring organ passages recalling English church music and horror-film soundtracks, saxophone honks reverberating like foghorns through a soupy sonic atmosphere, and massive rhythmic and vocal eruptions that married jazzy sensibilities with an almost psychotic pre-punk energy. Small wonder the group was a source of inspiration for Sex Pistols frontman/rabble-rouser Johnny Rotten.

Such a deranged and disparate assortment of elements demands a steady-handed kit player, and Guy Evans has been just that. Over the course of Van der Graaf's career, the drummer's deft stick work and carefully crafted rhythms have acted like a gasket for the band's explosive musical developments. Yet as much as Evans has provided the rhythmic rudder to keep his bandmates on course, he's also been a willing musical coconspirator who's shadowed singer/guitarist/piano player Peter Hammill's vocal lines, tracked the sonic freakouts of wailing saxophone, and momentarily vamped on twisted Afro-Latin-tinged patterns—only to take them in a totally different direction. This drumming duality is the perfect complement to Van der Graaf's schizophrenic compositional approach.

"If I had to list two drummer role models, they would be John Bonham and Tony Williams," Evans says. "If I could combine the spirit of those two drummers, that's where I'd like to be headed."

Evans, a jazzer at heart, grew up in Birmingham, England, lulled by the sounds of his father's big band, the Joe Evans Orchestra, later known as the Vincent Ladbroke Orchestra. "We lived in an apartment in South Yardley, just across the road from a big hotel, the Swan," Evans says. "My dad's whole band would congregate at the apartment

Joe Del Tufo

Matt Urban

GUY'S SETUP

Evans uses a 1960s Gretsch kit featuring a 20" bass drum, a 9x13 tom, and 14x14 and 14x16 floor toms, plus a $6\frac{1}{2}$x14 Mapex Black Panther Deep Forest walnut snare and a 6" Toca timbalito. According to Guy, his hardware is "a mishmash of newish Premier, secondhand Pearl, and distressed DIY, which induces ongoing pain for my long-suffering drum tech, Carl Wilson."

Evans' cymbals include a 20" Bosphorus Master series ride, '70s Zildjian 15" Rock hi-hats, a pair of 9" custom hi-hats cut from an old set of 15" Paiste hats, a 16" Istanbul Mehmet Nostalgia Dark crash, a 16" Istanbul Mehmet Samatya crash, a 20" Zildjian Medium ride, and an unbranded 14" China from Ray Man's percussion shop in London. He plays with Zildjian Tony Williams signature sticks.

"I use a standard Tama Iron Cobra kick pedal," Evans adds, "not a double-chain bondage model. None of my setup is written in stone, though. I change around all the time, partly out of frustration, partly out of seeking a particular feel or sound, partly because I am on a limited budget, and partly because sometimes things break."

and work out arrangements. Before their shows, they would all head off across the road, and I, supposedly, was headed off to bed. But on some evenings, particularly on Saturdays in the summertime, I could hear the band play. I even got to see them sometimes."

Evans initially tried his hand at the recorder and later attempted to play his dad's instrument of choice, the saxophone. But eventually he discovered that he preferred banging on furniture at home, "driving everybody nuts doing it," as he recalls. Smitten by the technical chops of Count Basie's longtime drummer Sonny Payne and gobbling up import jazz records from the States, Evans soon immersed himself in the worlds of bebop and big band drumming. "The big breakthrough came during the small moments when I sat in with my dad's band," says the drummer, who even adopted a jazz-oriented traditional stick grip. "I enjoyed the visceral feel of driving the great machine."

Evans was attending the University of Warwick when he was spotted by a journalist friend of the founder of the Charisma label, Tony Stratton-Smith, who alerted the Van der Graaf camp to Guy's skills. Evans joined the group in 1968. His ease behind the kit, syncopated accents, and laid-back feel, as well as his ability to let loose, are evident from the outset, on early albums such as *The Aerosol Grey Machine*, *The Least We Can Do Is Wave to Each Other*, and *H to He Who Am the Only One*. "Guy is and has been very exciting—and unpredictable—to play with," Hammill confirms.

"Van der Graaf Generator has always been a band about musical discovery," Evans says. "We explored areas of music that we probably hadn't gone into in other contexts."

With the release of 1971's *Pawn Hearts*, featuring the spellbinding twenty-three-minute epic "A Plague of Lighthouse Keepers," Van der Graaf solidified a loyal following in Italy, where the band had reached the top of the charts. "We toured Italy three times in 1972," keyboardist Hugh Banton says. "At one point we were performing two gigs a day." But playing so often outside their home country was taking its toll on the members; their mental, physical, and monetary resources were quickly dwindling, and the band split in 1972.

"After the madness of [the early period], I didn't want to go near the music business and record contracts," Evans recalls. "I just wanted to make music away from everything, on a Welsh hillside." The drummer didn't quite disappear from the scene, though. In 1973 he formed the Long Hello with Banton and Van der Graaf saxophonist/flautist David Jackson, which soon after

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Evans with Van der Graaf's classic '70s lineup

released its self-titled debut album. Evans also worked with Hammill on the frontman's solo efforts *Chameleon in the Shadow of the Night, The Silent Corner and the Empty Stage, In Camera*, and, a pre-new-wave shot of adrenaline, *Nadir's Big Chance*.

In early 1975, sensing the time was right, the members of Van der Graaf Generator reconvened to write new material. The albums that followed, *Godbluff*, *Still Life*, and *World Record*, arguably represent the band's greatest recordings and Evans' most intuitive work. Evans is in perfect sync with his bandmates, as if they're engaged in some form of musical telepathy. He circumnavigates quirky compositional transitions and tempo changes with Latin-esque cowbell patterns and snaky, swinging ride feels, which create small ripples in the larger sonic pool. He waits patiently for the precise moment to thrash, like a pre-feeding-frenzy great white.

"Tracks that were recorded during the time of *Godbluff* were done just after we'd come off tour," the drummer says. "They had that played-in feel. *Still Life* was more of a studio production. We kind of oscillate—we have recordings that capture what the live band is doing, and then others are more studio experimentation."

Over the next two years the band officially shortened its name to Van der Graaf, saw major shifts in personnel, and released 1977's *The Quiet Zone/The Pleasure Dome* and 1978's double live album, *Vital*. But once again Van der Graaf had run out of steam and called it quits. Aside from very occasional one-off reunions of the classic lineup, the group essentially lay dormant for over twenty-five years.

In the interim, Evans performed and recorded with the famed progressive bands Mother Gong and Amon Düül, among others. He also continued to appear on solo albums by Hammill and Van der Graaf bassist Nic Potter, and in 1983 cofounded an organization/performance group called Echo City, which designs instruments known as sonic playgrounds.

In 2004, Hammill, Jackson, Banton, and Evans reunited on a more permanent basis, resurrecting the name Van der Graaf Generator and releasing the double album *Present* in 2005—an understated title for such a musically rich and bounteous affair. "There was a great resistance toward reuniting," Evans says, "because we realized we'd done something fairly special in the 1970s, and we didn't want to screw it up. At the same time we found that we were only meeting each other at the funerals of our ex–road crew and friends. There came a dawning, a realization, that if we were ever going to do it, it had better be now."

In 2005 Van der Graaf recorded the live document *Real Time: Royal Festival Hall* (which was released in 2007), and late that year Jackson exited, leaving Evans, Hammill, and Banton free to take more musical chances than ever. "With a three-piece you have flexibility," Evans says. "I think it's the largest lineup possible without having to arrange stuff."

The trio has learned an intriguing method for reinterpreting Van der Graaf's older material. "We try to discern exactly what the rationale was behind playing a particular passage," says Evans, who teaches music technology at Davies Laing & Dick College in London. "A good example is 'Childlike Faith in Childhood's End,' from *Still Life*. At one point there's a very fast passage with saxophones that we always used to refer to as 'the Glenn Miller section,' because it sounded like a big band. In that section there's a choreographed mistake where we are deliberately out of sync with one another. We had to dig deep into our collective memory to remember a specific rehearsal period and ask why we were doing what we did. It involves a bit of musical archaeology."

In 2008 the three-piece released its first studio record, *Trisector*. Hammill describes the warts-and-all collection as "the result of three chaps playing together in real time, learning, arranging, and recording at real speed." The album captures the essence of a veteran band utilizing twenty-first-century digital production techniques to shake free from musical categorization.

Since its reunion, Van der Graaf has continued its artful productivity. In 2009 the band toured the world and played its first shows in the U.S. since the late '70s. *Live at the Paradiso 14:04:07*, a CD/DVD document of a rousing concert in Amsterdam, was issued that year. And in 2011 the group released its second studio album as a trio, *A Grounding in Numbers*. As progressive rock elder statesmen, the members of Van der Graaf Generator are seemingly more productive and popular than ever.

"One of the things I was heartened by on the 2009 U.S. tour happened when we were in Milwaukee," Evans says. "A bunch of seventeen-year-olds came along and said, 'We never heard of you guys, but you looked quite interesting.' They really liked what we were doing. We couldn't ask for anything more."

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Playing Moods

Thoughts on Drumming From the Soul

by Jeremy Hummel

Within the last five to ten years, there has been major growth in drumming media. These days drummers can find books or DVDs on nearly any subject. One concept that's often overlooked, though, is the art of practicing moods. In this article I will explain not only why this subject is important but also how it could land you more work as a drummer.

Beats and rhythms are funny things. They're the foundation that a tune is built on, yet they can be interpreted in an infinite number of ways. Line up ten drummers and ask them to play the same basic rock groove at the same tempo, and there will be some variable that makes each player different. One person might play on top of the beat, while another tends to sit back on the groove. The next player may have a certain swagger on the backbeat.

Let's go a step further. Take those same ten drummers and put them in an environment with other musicians. The tempo is now varied, based on the mood or feel of the other players. How do the drummers respond? Do they play in a way that is complementary to the music? Or do they just focus on playing the beat the best they can?

Many of us educators use Tommy Igoe's *Groove Essentials* materials in our teaching facilities. I enjoy getting to the art of playing moods right away. Groove 3 from *Groove Essentials 1.0* is a basic rock track. When a student and I listen to the music on the play-along CD, the following exchange often occurs.

Me: "What does the music remind you of?"

Student: "What do you mean?"

Me: "Does it give you any kind of feeling? Happy? Sad? Ready to take on the world?"

Student: "I don't know."

Me: "Let's listen some more. I want you to tell me a place this music reminds you of."

I turn on the music again and wait until the student responds.

Answers I've gotten include church, a summer breeze, the beach, and a spring meadow—and they're all correct. When prompted, each student realizes that the music has a relaxed, laid-back vibe. If someone were to simply look at the notes on the page rather than listen to the music, though, Lars Ulrich pounding out a Metallica tune could come to mind. Depending on the musical context, this track could be played a number of ways.

Sure, you rock. Yes, you swing. But can you *vibe*?

Using Your Instrument to Embellish

We can use the different colors of the drumset to embellish the mood of the music. For example, playing toms can be a great way to complement a song's feel. In my clinics I cite two examples of this. When I recorded the song "So Cold" with Breaking Benjamin, I knew immediately that the usual kick/snare/hat beat was going to sound too happy. I went with big, open floor toms and a piccolo with the snares turned off for the verses. My second example is U2's "With or Without You." Simply by moving his left hand from the hi-hat to the floor tom, Larry Mullen Jr. creates a haunting, intimate vibe that wouldn't be so prominent if it were played differently.

Can You Bring It?

Most of us have been in groups where the musical feel varies throughout a performance (up-tempo, ballads, etc.). In classical music, musicians are sometimes given adjectives to describe how to play. Ask yourself how you would play affettuoso (with feeling, tenderly), con amore (with love), and scherzando (playfully). How about misterioso (mysteriously)? Beyond the notes on a page, a spectrum of emotions and moods is required to play a piece appropriately.

Let's apply this to a more common situation, like a jazz or rock gig. We are rarely given descriptions like those found on classical scores. Instead, we are expected to intuit and adapt. Let's face it—some nights we just aren't feeling a certain vibe. Maybe we had an argument with our other half, and it's tough to get into a longing ballad. Musicians are a lot like actors. I'm not implying that our intent is insincere, but we need to be able to draw from emotional resources and use them when they are needed most. Just as an actor has something that compels him or her to cry, musicians need a "go to" place as well. Music is nothing without conviction.

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If you don't yet have any ways to call up various emotions, here are a few moods and corresponding recordings that can help get you into the right headspace.

Excited: "Walking on Sunshine" by Katrina & the Waves
Melancholy: "Cause We've Ended as Lovers" by Jeff Beck
Happy/playful: "I Wish" by Stevie Wonder
Mysterious: "The Crystal Ship" by the Doors

In the Studio

I once showed up for a recording session at 9 A.M. wired on coffee and ready to rock. The tune I was given first was a sparse acoustic ballad called "Ghost Town." I immediately had to shift gears.

When you're working with a variety of artists in the recording studio, being able to play moods is paramount. While you might be hearing a tune for the first time, the artist you're working for has labored over it for days, months, or maybe even years. He or she has formed an emotional attachment to the piece. You should too.

Auditions

When you audition for a band, you could be asked to jam on freshly written material. Even if you ace the material you prepared, you might also have to display your creativity and how well you vibe.

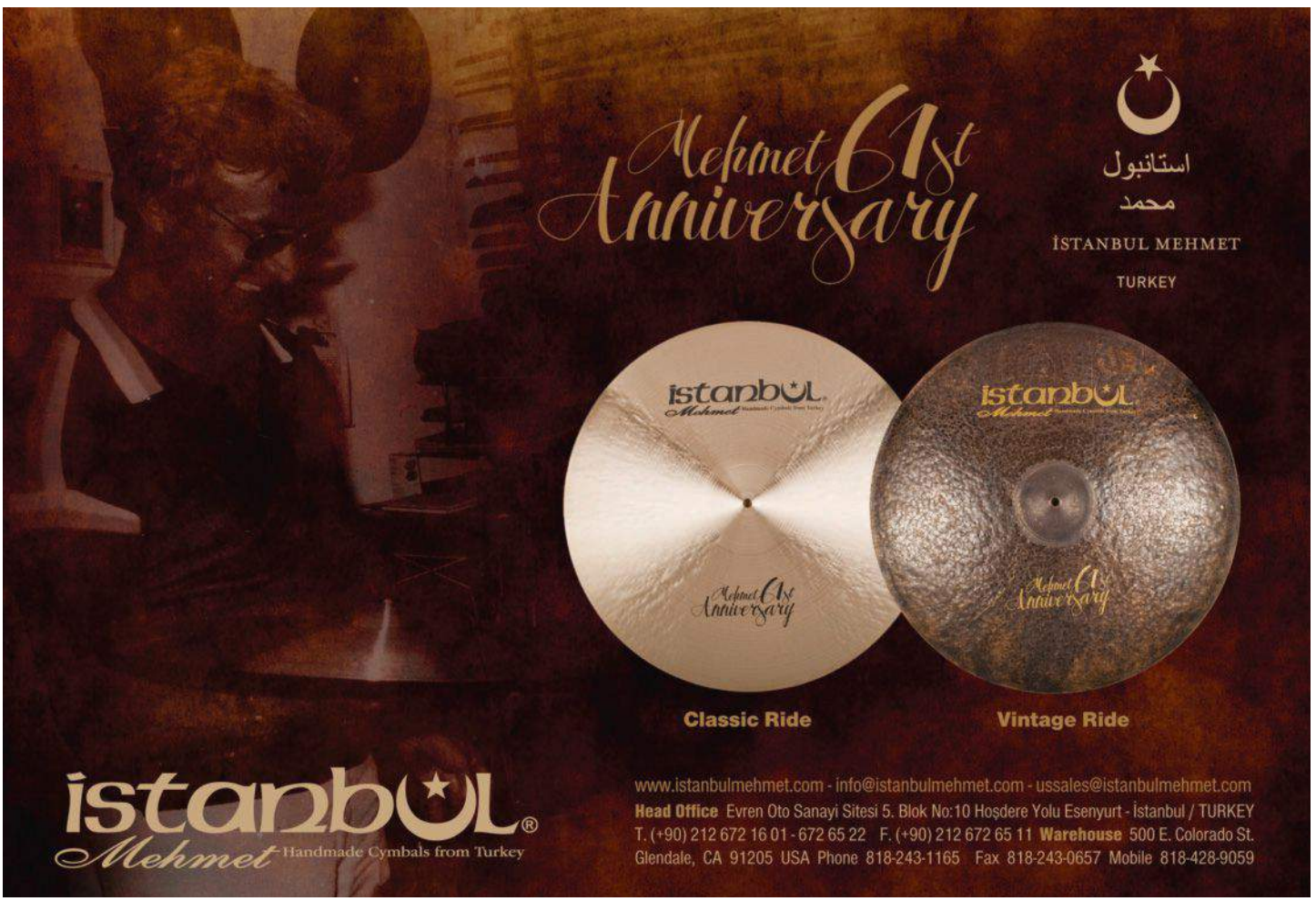
Sure, you rock. Yes, you swing. But can you *vibe*?

The next time you're practicing, try taking the same groove and applying it not just to different tempos but also to different moods. Then take it a step further. Write down a random list of moods and emotions on a piece of paper, and discover how you would play them.

I believe that a musician's greatness is determined by how well he or she gets to the heart and mood of the music, as opposed to achieving technical acrobatics on the drumkit.

In closing, I'd like to share a passage from one of my favorite books, *The Mastery of Music: Ten Pathways to True Artistry*, by Barry Green. Musician Eddie Daniels offers this sentiment: "In my view, it all comes back to the idea that playing music on the stage is a very godly thing; it comes from God, it is the most communicative, nonverbal, direct line to the heart. So, you can deal with learning all the notes and technique, but if you haven't learned the direct line to your heart yet, most probably you won't manage to do it tomorrow onstage. My idea of the true artist is someone who has all the technique at his disposal, but who also has a depth of being that comes through when he plays."

Jeremy Hummel was an original member of Breaking Benjamin. He helped that group achieve platinum status with its second release, *We Are Not Alone*. He has since turned his efforts to session work and drum instruction in Pennsylvania. Jeremy can be reached at his website, jeremyhummel.com.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Celebrating *4-Way Coordination*

A Tribute to Dahlgren and Fine's Masterpiece

by David Stanoch

"The future drummer will have to be as proficient with his feet as he is with his hands," predict Marvin Dahlgren and Elliot Fine in the introduction to their classic book, *4-Way Coordination*, first published in 1963. The book outlined new levels of coordination practice that moved drumming a step forward from Jim Chapin's groundbreaking *Advanced Techniques for the Modern Drummer* and the innovations of bebop-era drummers like Kenny Clarke and Max Roach, drawing more from the early work of post-bop master Elvin Jones and various modern classical music concepts.

"Many great books were written in the '50s and '60s, and one that caught my eye was *4-Way Coordination*," says Latin drumming legend Walfredo Reyes Sr., who pioneered the concept of a hybrid percussion drumset. "I knew immediately that this was what I was looking for." Prog-metal icon Danny Carey of Tool proclaims, "Marv and Elliot's *4-Way Coordination* took my independence to a new level."

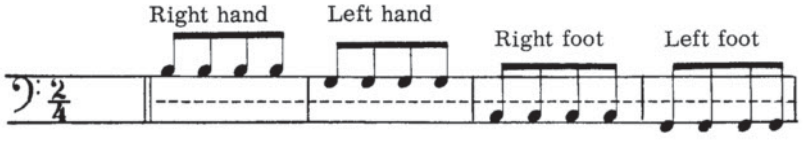
Let's examine some of the innovations the book introduced to drummers.

Expanded Swiss Notation

A central concept of *4-Way Coordination* is to develop foot independence equal to that of the hands. To keep the examples easy to read, the authors devised a variation on Swiss Basel drummer Dr. Fritz Berger's innovative notation system, which reduced traditional rhythmic notation from a five-line staff to a single line, allowing the sticking to be seen rather than spelled out.

4-Way features a two-line staff that assigns handwork to the top line and footwork to the bottom. "The advantage," Elliot Fine explains, "is in being able to visualize which limb plays what."

R. H. -Right hand
L. H. -Left hand
R. F. -Right foot
L. F. -Left foot



Complete Independence

Where Chapin's *Advanced Techniques* alludes to the idea of using the hi-hat as an independent voice, *4-Way* lays out specific studies to coordinate the left foot equally with the other three limbs. "Chapin influenced me to the possibilities," Marvin Dahlgren says, "and Elvin Jones was my inspiration."

In the excerpts we've pulled here, the hi-hat is played with the foot on 2 and 4 in the first bar and then shifts to a syncopated rhythm in the second bar, while the hands and bass drum maintain the same coordinated rhythm throughout. This is a concept you'll often hear today in the playing of modern jazz great Bill Stewart.

Melodic and Harmonic Coordination

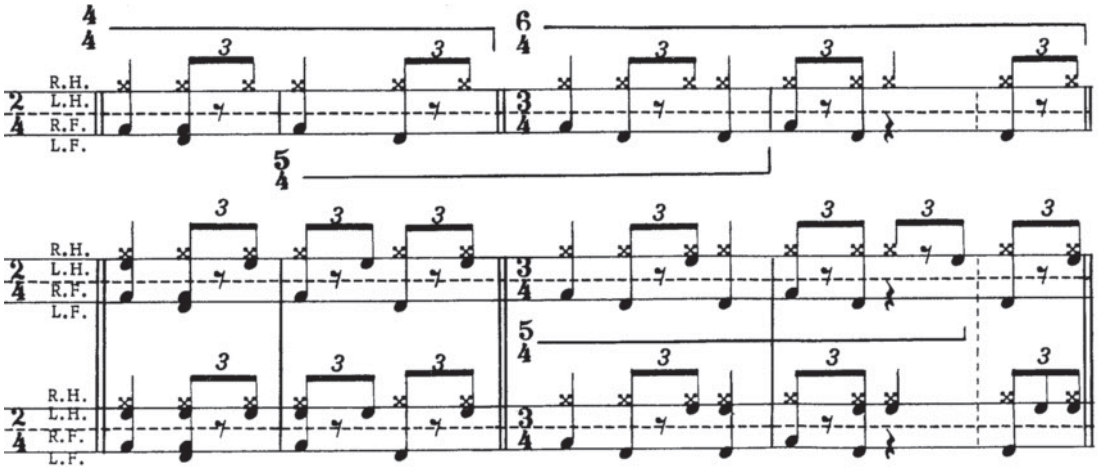
The Melodic Coordination chapter of the book features the first four-way linear drumming studies in print, which influenced jazz legend Tony Williams and funk drummer Jim Payne, among others. It's interesting to note that throughout much of the book the authors choose to keep the voicing of each limb neutral so that students can explore their own creative orchestrations. How might you interpret the following examples as a funk groove or jazz solo break?

Harmonic coordination refers to playing with more than one limb at a time. Try these examples yourself to develop a balance of dependent and independent coordination—or what has come to be termed "inter-dependent" coordination.

A and C, hands and feet are identical; B and D, hands and feet are opposite

Mixed Meter Studies

By 1963 it was common in jazz to play not only in 2/4 or 4/4 time but also in 3/4, 5/4, and 6/4. Dahlgren and Fine created a clever system for expanding jazz timekeeping coordination by incorporating these meters. In the next example, the ride cymbal and feet create an ostinato while the left hand phrases on top.

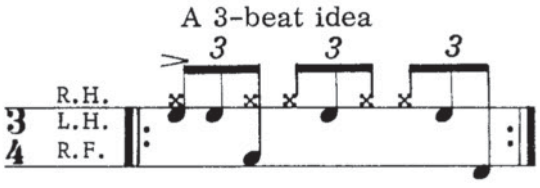


Using the above example, it would be easy to extend the phrasing to other meters that are common today, like 7/4 or 9/4. Try it!

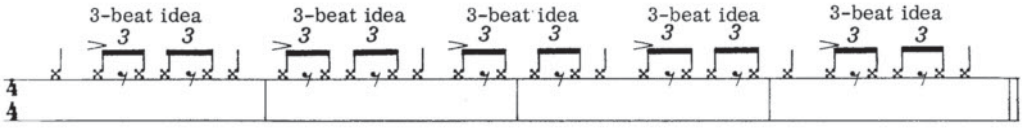
Advanced Polyrhythmics

Elvin Jones was a close friend of Dahlgren and Fine's for over forty years. The authors acknowledge Jones's groundbreaking drumming concepts from the early '60s as the influence for their studies on playing three-beat ideas in 4/4 time.

Try this 3/4 combination…



…with this phrasing in 4/4. (The three-beat phrase starts on the second beat of the first measure.)



The following examples can be considered 12/8 over 4/4, with triplets in the hands and straight 8th notes in the feet. While the feet continuously motor single strokes, the hands shift from singles to doubles to paradiddles to a five-note grouping, all of which are phrased within a triplet pulse. This type of phrasing was used extensively by double bass pioneer Louie Bellson. Just imagine the possibilities you can create on your own when you incorporate your double pedal or a second bass drum!

Lasting Impact

4-Way Coordination is a contribution to the art of drumming from two forward-thinking players with great imagination. The book remains as innovative today as when it was first released, and it continues to challenge players of all levels—as reflected by master drummer Steve Smith.

"When I studied with Alan Dawson from 1973 to '74," Smith recalls, "one of the texts he used in his teaching was the Dahlgren and Fine *4-Way Coordination* book. Alan had amazing four-way coordination, and I think some of that came from the influence of the *4-Way* book. I worked on that material under his direction, and it helped me develop a smooth flow between all four limbs.

"Recently I was in a music store in Manhattan and noticed a drummer at the counter buying a copy of *4-Way Coordination*," Steve goes on. "I asked him about it, and he said he'd heard about the book for a long time and was ready to check it out. I commended him on his choice; *4-Way Coordination* is clearly a classic. Thank you, Marv and Elliot!"

Excerpts from 4-Way Coordination *used with permission of the authors and Alfred Music Publishing.*

David Stanoch is a faculty member at the McNally Smith College of Music. For more information, visit rhythmelodic.com.

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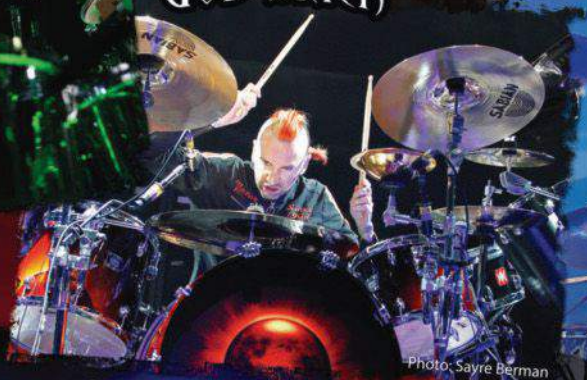

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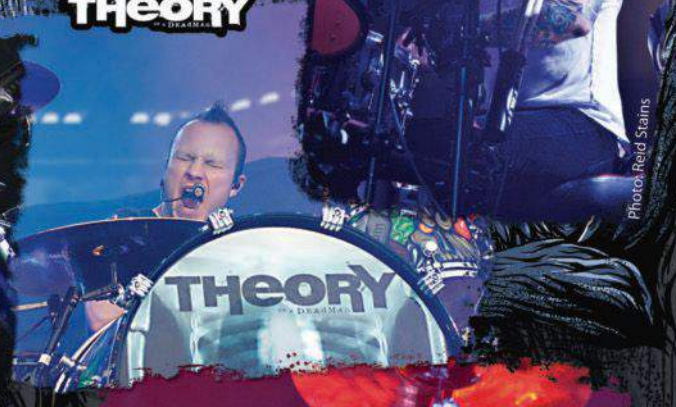

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Write Creative Drum Parts

Part 3: Interpreting Threes

by Chris Prescott

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MUSIC KEY

For the third installment of this series, I thought it would be appropriate to examine the various ways to interpret music based in threes. Most rock music is played in 4/4, or common time, but a great way to add variety to a set of songs is to use alternate time signatures.

Without incorporating too much complexity or disjointedness, a few bars of 3/4 or 6/8 can do a lot to make your music unique and more interesting. When you interpret a song that employs these meters, you can make several choices in writing your drum part. Drum patterns in 3/4 and 6/8 can be interchanged freely, by altering the way you organize the time. Let's first examine some of the details in the organization and characteristics of 3/4 and 6/8 meters.

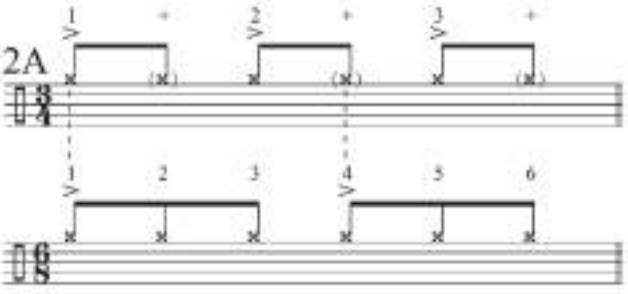
Many drummers wonder about the differences between 3/4 and 6/8. This can be a little confusing, since both of these time signatures contain six 8th notes. The primary difference lies in the way the notes are organized into larger rhythmic pulses. A bar of 3/4 time is organized into three quarter-note pulses (triple meter), resulting in an asymmetrical, lilting quality. A measure of 6/8 is divided evenly into two pulses (duple meter), each containing three 8th notes. The pulses in a measure of 3/4 or 6/8 are felt more profoundly than any of the individual 8th-note subdivisions.

Drum patterns in 3/4 have an unequal, hurried feeling. This is partially due to the frequency of the accented pulses in each measure. The 3/4 meter has a pulse every two 8th notes, as compared with every three 8th notes in 6/8. The increased frequency of these pulses gives the impression of the music moving along at a faster rate.

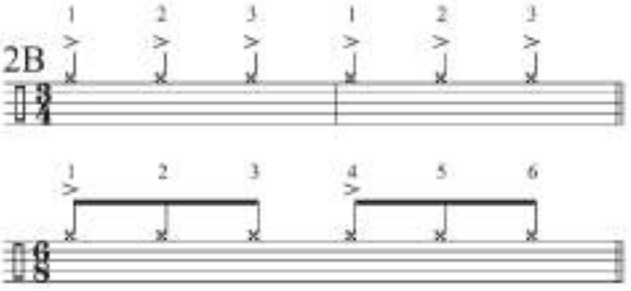
Patterns in 6/8 have a flowing, drawn-out quality. This can be attributed to the additional spacing between accents as well as the balanced symmetry within the measure. When writing music, you might choose one time signature over another based on the feeling you're trying to convey.

Since the pulse of the music is ultimately determined by the melodic and rhythmic structure of the piece, the drum part must conform. But there are still choices in how we can interpret these structures. Superimposing a time signature of 3/4 over an existing musical passage in 6/8 can work flawlessly—as long as the pulses of the drums and the rest of the music line up correctly. In order for this to work, an adjustment in the time concept is required. When you double-time two measures of 3/4, the pulses will line up with a single measure of 6/8.

In example 2A, the 8th notes are equal in both rhythms, but the pulses do not line up. The weak 8th notes in 3/4 are shown in parentheses.



In Example 2B, we double-time the 3/4 rhythm and drop the weaker 8th notes. In this example the accented quarter-note pulse of 3/4 equates with the 8th note of the 6/8 pattern. The flow of time and the rhythmic pulse of the music can then remain intact.



Now let's apply this concept. Example 3 contains a rhythm that might be found in a song's bass part. This will later be used as the rhythmic basis for the drum pattern examples, interpreted in both 3/4 and 6/8 time. It's important to note that although the two metric interpretations are counted (and written) differently, the actual rhythm remains unchanged.

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When you interpret the previous rhythmic example as a drum part, you can make a direct connection with the rhythms and melodies of the song. First, let's examine this rhythm with drum patterns in 3/4 time.

Now we'll explore the same source rhythm interpreted as a 6/8 drum pattern. Make sure to check out the audio examples that are posted at moderndrummer.com to hear how these two approaches can affect the sound and feel of the music.

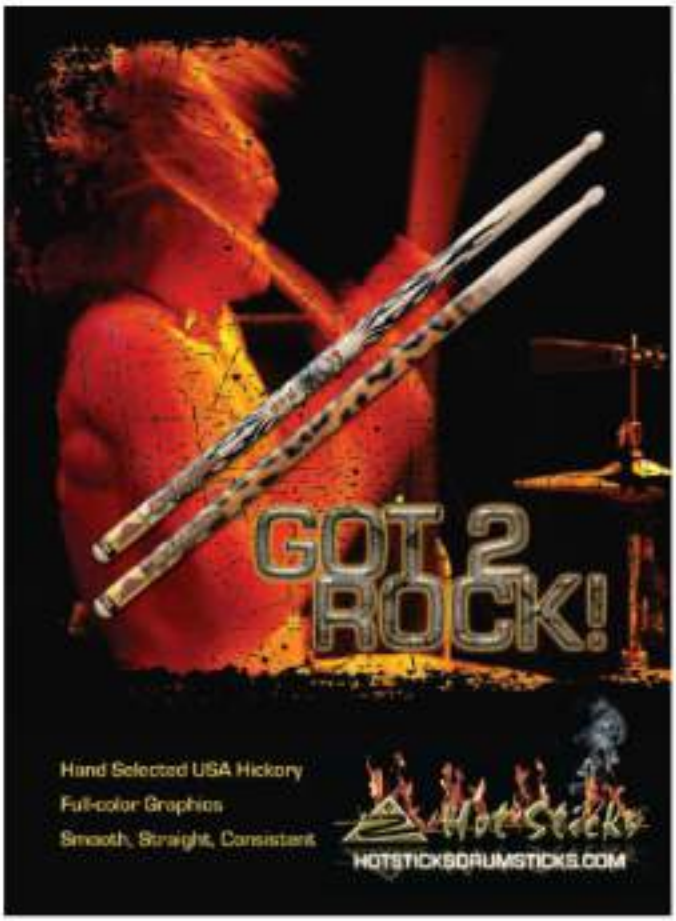
Remember that in order to interchange these two meters, the quarter-note value of 3/4 is now equal to the 8th-note value of 6/8. This can cause confusion when you discuss the music with the rest of the band, if they're not thinking in terms of the same meter. You won't be changing the way they're counting or organizing their parts; you will simply be superimposing a faster or slower time feel on top of what they're already doing.

Playing in 6/8 feels more drawn out, since 6/8 grooves often employ a single backbeat on beat 4. This creates a half-time feel. You might choose to play a 6/8 drum pattern if you want to give the music an open, flowing quality. A meter of 6/8 can also be a good choice for songs with faster tempos, since it gives the music a little breathing room.

Alternately, playing two measures of 3/4 in the same amount of time feels considerably faster, as this contains two snare backbeats when played with a double-time interpretation. Such an approach can add propulsion to a part that needs to be hurried along.

It's also nice to give the music some variety by alternating 3/4 and 6/8 within a single song. For example, you might choose to interpret a verse section in 3/4 and then flow into the chorus with a pattern in 6/8. The choice to use one or the other moves the music in different directions. When writing your part, always try several different approaches and see what sounds right to you. There's never an absolute right or wrong way to write your part, but through experimentation you may surprise yourself by heading in a new direction.

Chris Prescott is a San Diego–based multi-instrumentalist who currently drums for Pinback. His recently published book, *Creative Construction*, is available through his website, ccdrumbooks.com.



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Relative Tempo

Click-Shifting Exercises to Improve Your Sense of Time

by Steve Fidyk

Wind instrumentalists work on relative pitch by listening to intervals (the distance between two notes) over and over again, in an effort to develop the ability to play with good intonation. In my college wind ensemble, when the intonation within the group was not very good, the conductor would say, "Pitch is a place, not an area." This adage holds true when discussing the tempo for a piece of music. In order for the music to groove, the rhythms need to be consistent and flowing, and the more you practice with a metronome, the easier it will be for you to identify the ideal tempo for the ensemble.

Take, for example, a big band chart. If the tempo of the drum part is marked at 138 bpm and you count in the band at 80 bpm, it will be very difficult for the lead trumpet player to sustain the notes and perform the phrases correctly. A drummer with a good sense of tempo can count in an ensemble and be within four beats per minute of the suggested speed.

In addition to practicing with a metronome to develop tempo, you can also relate tempo markings to the pace of a song you're very familiar with. For instance, if the piece is marked at 120 bpm, you can hum a few bars of "Stars and Stripes Forever" to find the tempo. For a ballad at 60 bpm, look down at your watch and follow the second hand.

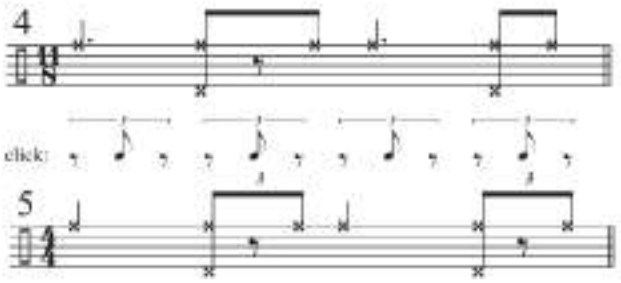
Click Shifting

In order to help my placement of each note value, I count 16th notes when performing funk or rock grooves, and I count 8th-note triplets when playing swing music. The following exercise can help you develop your timing of subdivisions from beat to beat as you shift the position of the quarter-note click.

For a beat that's subdivided into 8th-note triplets, the click track or metronome is generally practiced in this position.

In an 8th-note-triplet grouping there are two additional possibilities for the placement of the click.

When you insert this 11/8 measure, the click track position shifts to the second 8th note within the triplet grouping.



When you insert the 11/8 measure a second time, the click shifts to the third part of the triplet.

Practice shifting to all three positions by playing three measures of time at each one and then inserting the 11/8 measure.

You can also apply this click-shifting approach to beats that use straight 8ths and 16ths. For a beat that's subdivided

into 16th notes, the click track or metronome is normally practiced in this position.

For one grouping of four 16th notes, there are three additional possibilities for the placement of the click.

When you insert this 15/16 measure, the click track position shifts to the second 16th note within the grouping.

When you insert the 15/16 measure a second time, the click shifts once again.

When you insert the 15/16 measure a third time, the click shifts to the final position.

Practice these four 16th-note click positions using the same procedure as in Example 7, playing each position three times followed by the 15/16 measure.

As you practice these exercises, listen critically to the sound you're producing. Direct your focus toward your upper and lower appendages, and be sure that they're balanced dynamically. As you become more comfortable and confident with what we've included here, try applying the click-shifting process to a variety of different beats and grooves. Just be patient and count carefully.

I've created audio examples of the triplet and 16th-note cycles for you to check out. They are posted on the Education page at moderndrummer.com.

Steve Fidyk is the drummer with the Army Blues Big Band from Washington, D.C., and a member of the jazz faculty at Temple University in Philadelphia. Fidyk is also the author of the critically acclaimed book *Inside the Big Band Drum Chart*, which is published by Mel Bay.

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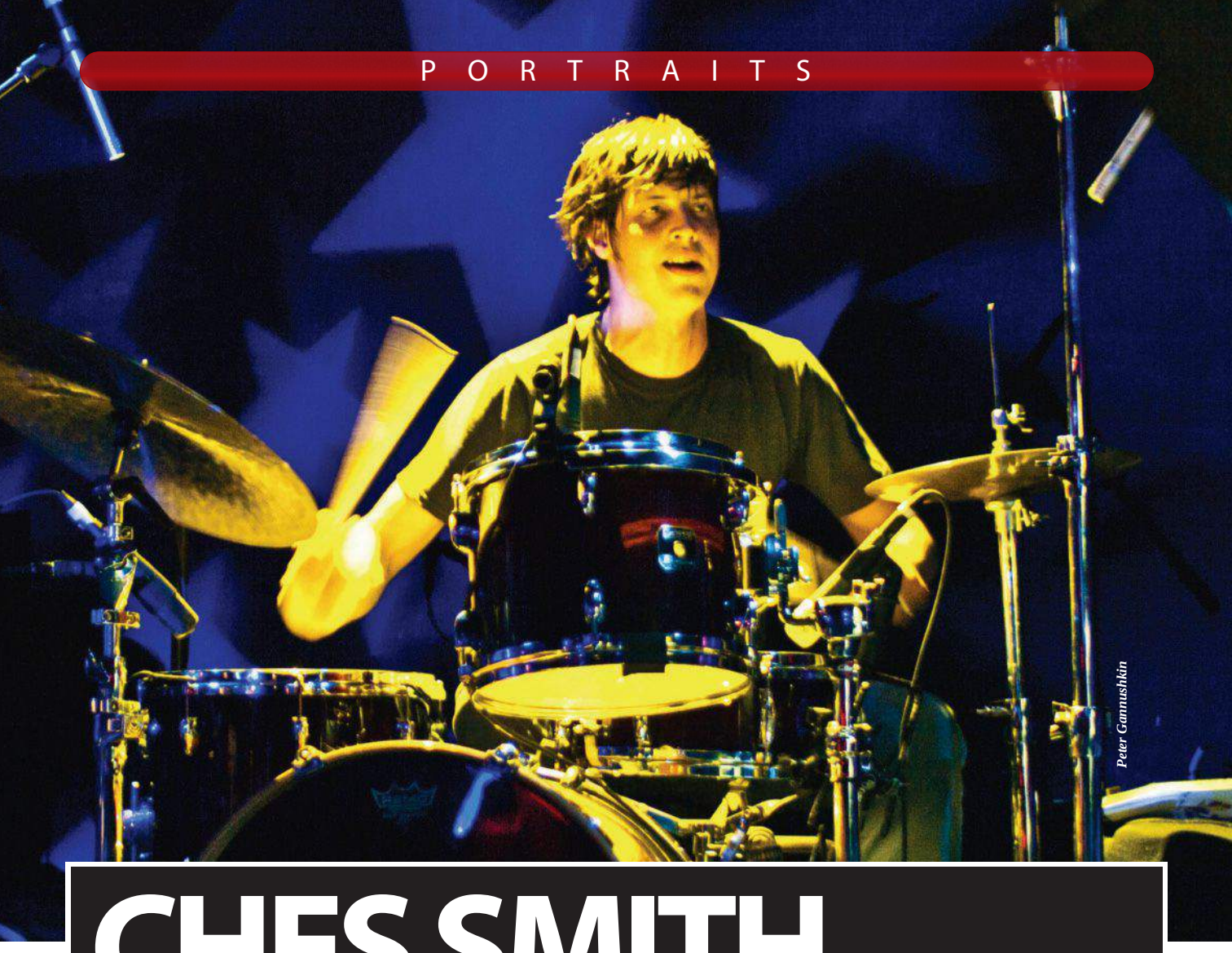

Peter Gannushkin

CHES SMITH

by Ilya Stemkovsky

Whether adding percussives to **Mr. Bungle**'s avant-garde drama, wrangling electronics with **Marc Ribot**, or negotiating Persian rhythms with **Secret Chiefs 3**, the New York drummer succeeds by defining parameters—and embracing the unknown.

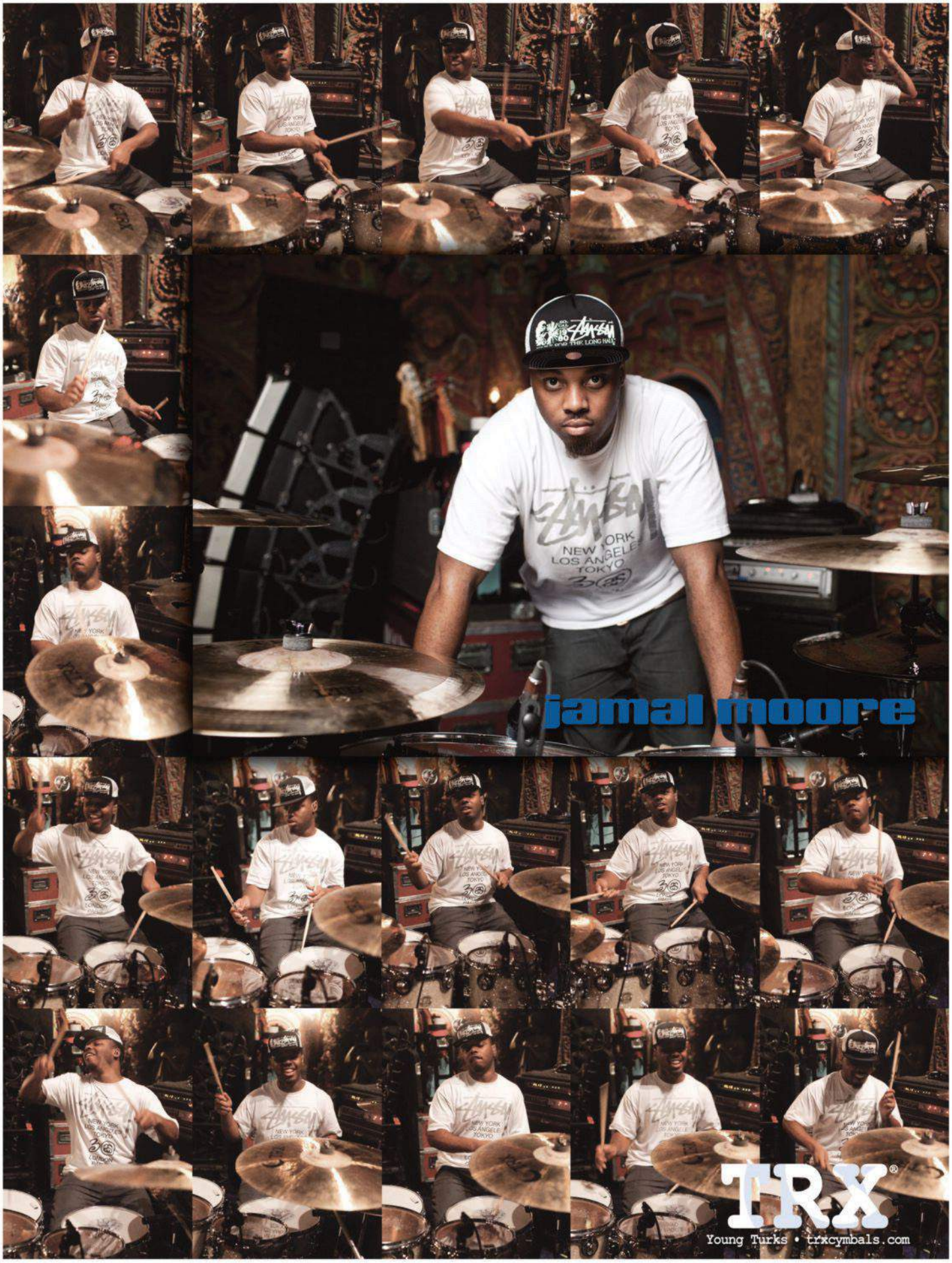
Ches Smith's style isn't so easy to pin down. One day he's recording his solo project Congs for Brums, mixing drums, vibes, and electronics, and the next he's leading These Arches, an unconventional acoustic quartet exploring uncharted improvisational territory. What he plays and the tone of his drums are in constant flux from group to group. And while most drummers dread having to handle the "cardboard box" house kit, Smith relishes the opportunity. "I love to use backline drums and cymbals," he says. "It presents challenges that have to be overcome quickly. I always carry a roll of duct tape and some tools. If a promoter warns me that I may not like the kit, that's when I think it'll be fun—my personality will come through anyway."

Having cut his teeth on the West Coast experimental scene, Smith has gone on to play with Trevor Dunn, Xiu Xiu, Theory of Ruin, Marc Ribot, Tim Berne, Iggy Pop, Terry Riley, and the Mr. Bungle offshoot Secret Chiefs 3, among others. *Modern Drummer* caught up with the busy New York–based drummer during a brief gap in his stacked recording and touring schedule.

MD: How did you get into nontraditional jazz?
Ches: In high school, a teacher told me jazz was Steely Dan. I believed that! Later, another teacher made me a jazz mix tape, which led me to Miles Davis's *Nefertiti* and John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme*. I don't know if I got it right away, but that's when I started playing in school combos in Eugene, Oregon. By the mid-'90s, I was in the Bay Area, simultaneously playing bebop and joining harsher improvising noise bands.
MD: Obviously your groups aren't swinging "Autumn Leaves." Is it difficult to choose to play fringe music?
Ches: It wasn't really a choice. The direction you go in just happens. I met [bassist]

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Although Smith loves to use backline equipment, he sometimes plays a 1980s Tama Rockstar kit and various Ludwig kits from the '60s and '70s. His snares include a 5x14 Slingerland and an 8x14 Brady. He also adores his 32" 1930s WFL marching bass drum and says he's been fond of 24" cymbals lately. Ches uses a Musser M44 vibraphone, a 1989 Boss Dr. Rhythm sampler, and a Moog Rogue synthesizer. He plays Aquarian heads and "for pounding, the biggest Vater marching sticks I can find."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Trevor Dunn when he was in Mr. Bungle, and that led to my involvement in his trio, my playing percussion on a few Mr. Bungle tours, and eventually joining Secret Chiefs 3.

MD: As opposed to some of your groups where you have free rein, what's the biggest challenge of Secret Chiefs 3—the tight structures and Middle Eastern music?

Ches: Yeah, it's all the crazy drum parts that [guitarist and leader] Trey Spruance writes. For me there's a lot of memorizing these up/down, kick/snare scenarios that go melodically with the octave bass lines. Trey uses lots of Arabic and Persian rhythms and feels. I'd shed that stuff with help from SC3 bassist Shahzad Ismaily, who's Pakistani. But I'm getting more and more input into drum parts and arrangements as well.

MD: Let's talk about the latest record from your Congs for Brums solo project, *Noise to Men*. The metric modulation hi-hat part on "Difference" is killer.

Ches: All that stuff started as etudes. I studied with Pete Magadini in the Bay Area and worked on polyrhythms for a while. "Difference" comes from playing in 4/4, moving to 5/4, and going all the way up to 8 and then back down again. For Congs I also use vibraphone and electronics, basically doing it all at once. Getting the dynamics of the electronics down using volume pedals is tricky, and vibes is such a softer instrument. It takes a while for me to get in shape to play that music.

MD: Is mixing all those variables a new thing for you?

Ches: Relatively new. Around 2005, Marc Ribot had me introduce those elements in his group Ceramic Dog. He wanted their entrance to be obvious—to announce themselves as electronics. He likes reference points to play against, so cheap-sounding crap and generic DJ sounds were great. It's clearly connected to the New York downtown scene of the '80s.

MD: There's also some Congs YouTube clips of you putting your foot on the snare to change pitches.

Ches: I first saw Han Bennink and Joey Baron do that. Then I began studying a lot of Afro-Haitian music where a drum is sideways on the floor and you sit on the shell while your foot digs into the head to get melodies. It's a totally legitimate technique, even though it looks crazy. [laughs]

MD: Your drums/bass duo with Devin Hoff, Good for Cows, has been mainly acoustic. Was there a conscious decision to use electric bass for the latest record, *Audumla*?

Ches: That's partly because it's getting really difficult and expensive to fly with an upright—anywhere from $300 to $1,000 or more, and some airlines won't even take the flight case. So we decided to try the electric bass and the challenge of writing a whole set for that. Plus we've always been into metal and loud music, so that ended up on the record. Necessity is the mother of invention.

MD: Is the double-time drumming on "Secret Hobbies" from *Audumla* difficult in terms of stamina?

Ches: For a blast beat, it's slow enough where I can do it forever. But I'm hitting as hard as I can with marching sticks. Guys like Dale Crover and Dave Lombardo hit hard, but the groove is still there. And I also have a crash cymbal to my left that's raised high, so I can swing really hard at it.

MD: Conversely, there's no bassist in your group These Arches.

Ches: Sometimes you can start to really lean on a bass player. They can make a drummer sound better. I've always had a good sense of the form and knowing the place on my own. Without bass, the groove is so exposed, and that's a good thing for me to deal with.

MD: What's next?

Ches: I'm working on a third Congs for Brums record, as well as tours with Tim Berne and Marc Ribot. I just want to throw myself into situations and deal with it. That's how I've always grown as a musician.

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MacIntyre with Miami-based artist Jesse Jackson

DRUMMER/PRODUCER

Bobby MacIntyre's Studio 71

The Twilight Singers/Mark Lanegan vet gets busy—real busy—at his Miami studio.

Story by Michael Dawson
Photos by Sayre Berman

"Nowadays you've got to invent your own existence," says Miami-based drummer/producer Bobby MacIntyre. "It's not just being a drummer anymore. You can play with artists and tour, but that's not always available. You have to put yourself out there and have people come to you."

MacIntyre relocated back to his hometown five years ago, after slugging it out for almost a decade in Los Angeles as a touring/studio drummer and freelance producer, working with a wide range of artists including the Twilight Singers, Lucinda Williams, Martha Wainwright, BulletBoys, Jennifer Stills (daughter of Stephen Stills), Mark Lanegan, and Joseph Arthur. Although the decision to leave such a solid network in L.A. might seem like a career death wish to some drummers, MacIntyre has had no trouble maintaining a busy schedule at his Studio 71 facility, working with clients from his local Florida scene or with international artists who want to take advantage of the vacation-like vibe in Miami.

"I'm just getting set up for a mix session with an artist from Slovenia," MacIntyre says. "I had produced his band, Psycho-Path, after meeting them while I was on tour in Europe with the Twilight Singers. Now he's doing his own record and wanted to mix it in Miami. I have a bunch of instruments here, so he can do overdubs and put extra colors on before we mix. That's what this studio is about—bringing artists in and living the experience for two weeks, a month, whatever it takes. I cook dinner every night, and artists just live here for the duration, rather than renting out time in a studio and being on the clock. It's really important to have a vibe in your place that's conducive to writing songs and making music."

MacIntyre's space is situated in a peaceful residential neighborhood. The structure is a four-bedroom, two-story home that's been completely converted to a studio. "There's a grand piano in one room," Bobby says. "There's a writing room, there's a live room with an upright piano, organs, Rhodes, vibes…. Guitars are hanging on the walls, so if you're inspired to play something, you just look up and grab what you want."

To keep the peace with the neighbors, each room of Studio 71 is soundproofed as much as possible. "There are mattresses and futons in the windows," MacIntyre explains. "And I added layers of carpet, wood, and more carpet to make sure it's tight."

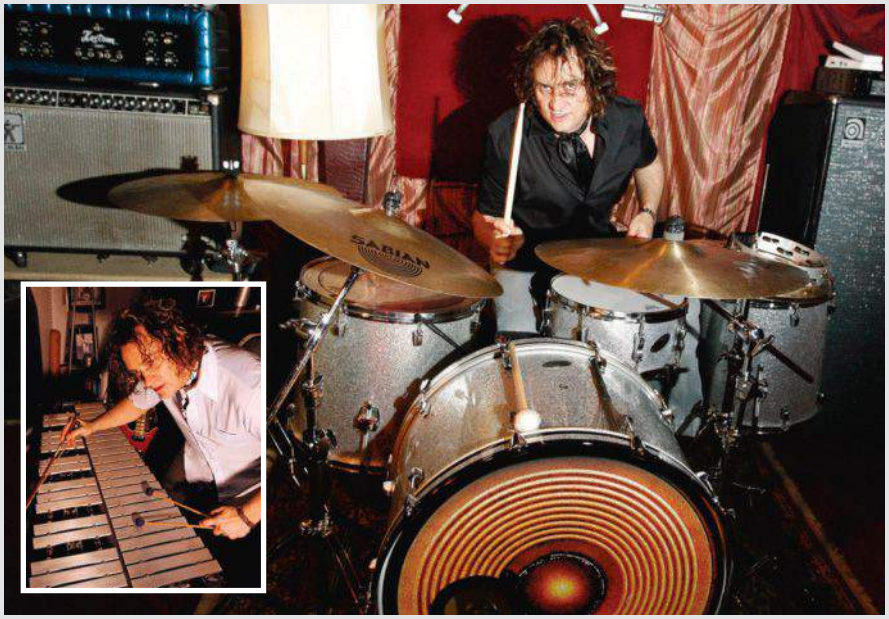
MacIntyre's approach to drumming in the studio stems from his extensive experience as a live performer. "When I get hired to tour with bands, it comes from the fact that I'm into songs," he says. "The dynamics are very important—bringing things down in the verses, really exaggerating stuff and listening to one another. In the studio, it's a similar world. You just have to be a little more focused and a little more exaggerated with the dynamics.

"You also get to be a little more creative in the studio," MacIntyre continues. "Sometimes when I hear a song, it's like, 'Let's twist the drumset completely backwards and see what happens.' Sometimes you'll come up with really cool ideas right away, just by thinking differently. You can sit there all day and come up with a million different ways to play a track, but if you're feeling something in the beginning, commit to it."

So how does an independent producer with a studio find people to work with?

Room by Room

Studio 71's control room is filled with guitars, cellos, organs, and amps—all within easy access for overdubs. The windows and doors are padded for soundproofing, and there's a parachute hanging from the ceiling to control sound reflections.



The studio's live room is outfitted with a bass cabinet, a vibraphone, a glockenspiel, a full PA system, an upright piano, a Fender Rhodes, a Hammond M3 organ, guitar amps, shelves of percussion, and a Ludwig drumset with Sabian cymbals.

The rest of Studio 71 consists of a writing room with a couch, chairs, guitars, and a collection of vinyl records. "This room is where you come to just hang," MacIntyre says.

There's a Steinway grand piano in one of the bedrooms, while the remaining bedrooms, which have various musical toys lying around, are for guests to find a bit of privacy. "I do my best to keep everybody happy," MacIntyre says. "Everybody just makes themselves at home, and that's how I like it."

"When I was in L.A., I had a studio on a ranch with Mark Dutton, who played in L.A. Guns," MacIntyre says. "People would come to the ranch to make music. That's how I met a lot of artists. Then we started leading songwriting nights in different venues to find artists to work with. People would come out to play, and I'd take them in the back behind the stage to hear their song. If the song was good, we'd put them on stage and play with them. When the artist likes what we've done, then all of a sudden we're putting a band together for them and producing their records."

The other way MacIntyre has found production work has been through connections he's made on the road. "Touring around the world has helped me meet people," the drummer says. "People see me play, and they'll investigate and find out that I also produce records. I've always had bands, and I try to be as visual as possible. You need to go out to see who's around and who's playing. Introduce yourself to bands and artists that you'd like to work with. You've got to be social and let people know that you're around. You can't just sit at home and wait for the phone to ring."

Camco

The Little Company That Could

by Harry Cangany

The vintage marketplace has seen the value of Camco drums surpass that of many larger brands. It reminds me of the children's book *The Little Engine That Could*. This small company from Oaklawn, Illinois, with roots in Elkhart and Indianapolis, built such great drums that forty to fifty years later we're *still* fighting for them.

Camco started as a machine shop that built drum accessories, before taking over the George Way Drum Company in Elkhart. Way, a longtime Leedy employee, continued the Leedy shell design and relationship with Jasper Wood Products.

We've found a good source for more info on Camco in Dan Wolstenholme. Wolstenholme worked at Camco in Oaklawn for a year before the company was sold to Kustom Electronics in Chanute, Kansas, in 1971. He remembers a small workforce of fewer than fifteen employees. Three men worked in the machine shop with twenty or so lathes, and a few women, near retirement age, assembled the drums. Wolstenholme's first job was spraying red glossy enamel on Camco practice pads.

When Conn sold Leedy to Slingerland and sold Ludwig back to the Ludwig family, neither manufacturer needed the extra drum-making equipment and drill presses. Two years after the sales, George Way opened his company inside the Buescher Building, the former site of Leedy & Ludwig, so it's likely that Way used the machinery that had been left behind. Then, when Camco took control of the George Way Drum Company, operators were moved to the small Camco factory at 9221 South Kirkpatrick Avenue in Oaklawn. Wolstenholme says that Camco had automatic machines left over from Way, and they were "old and slow."

Camco had a good relationship with Slingerland, often using the company for special orders that couldn't easily be made in Camco's own factory. Wolstenholme remembers one customer ordering a 20" gold sparkle bass drum that was 28" deep, in 1971. The customer eventually sent the drum back and had it chopped in half to make two conventional-size models.

When it was announced that Kustom was buying Camco and moving it to Kansas, a delegation from Kustom came to Oaklawn and looked for the blueprints for making Camco drums and hardware. But there weren't any. Camco had templates, and its employees had experience—but no blueprints.

As a side note, Wolstenholme says that during World War II, Camco Oaklawn made parts for hand grenades.

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GEARING UP Drumkit Details, On Stage and Up Close

Alkaline Trio's DEREK GRANT

Interview and photos by Sayre Berman

Drums: C&C with aluminum-siding covers
A. 8x14 cast aluminum snare
B. 14x14 tom (8-ply maple)
C. 16x16 floor tom (8-ply maple)
D. 14x28 bass drum (10-ply maple)

"This is the fourth kit that C&C has built for me, and each one has had a progressively larger kick," Grant says. "When I met with Bill Cardwell, the founder of C&C, about eight years ago, I had already decided that I wanted to go from a 22" to a 24". The main thrust behind that decision was John Bonham. I was looking to get almost a big band jazz kit. Bonham played a 26" kick, but I knew I had to take baby steps to get there.

"Fast-forward a few years, and I've worked up to a 14x28 kick. Interestingly, the transition from the 26" to the 28" wasn't that big of a shift, certainly not like the shift from 24" to 26"."

Heads: Remo Coated Emperor snare batter, Coated Ambassador tom batters, and Powerstroke 3 bass drum batter

"My drum tech, Scott Anna, and I went through the whole line of Remo drumheads. We tried everything—Clear Ambassadors, Clear Emperors, Pinstripes.... But we loved the Coated Ambassadors on the toms. They feel and sound the best. For a long time those were the only heads that producers would let me use in the studio."

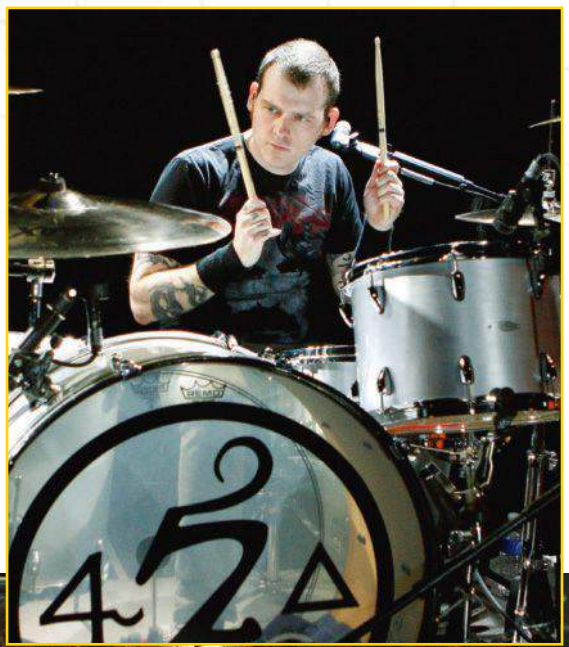
Cymbals: Sabian
1. 14" AAX Metal Hats
2. 18" AAX Dark crash
3. 22" AAX Metal ride
4. 18" AAX X-Plosion crash

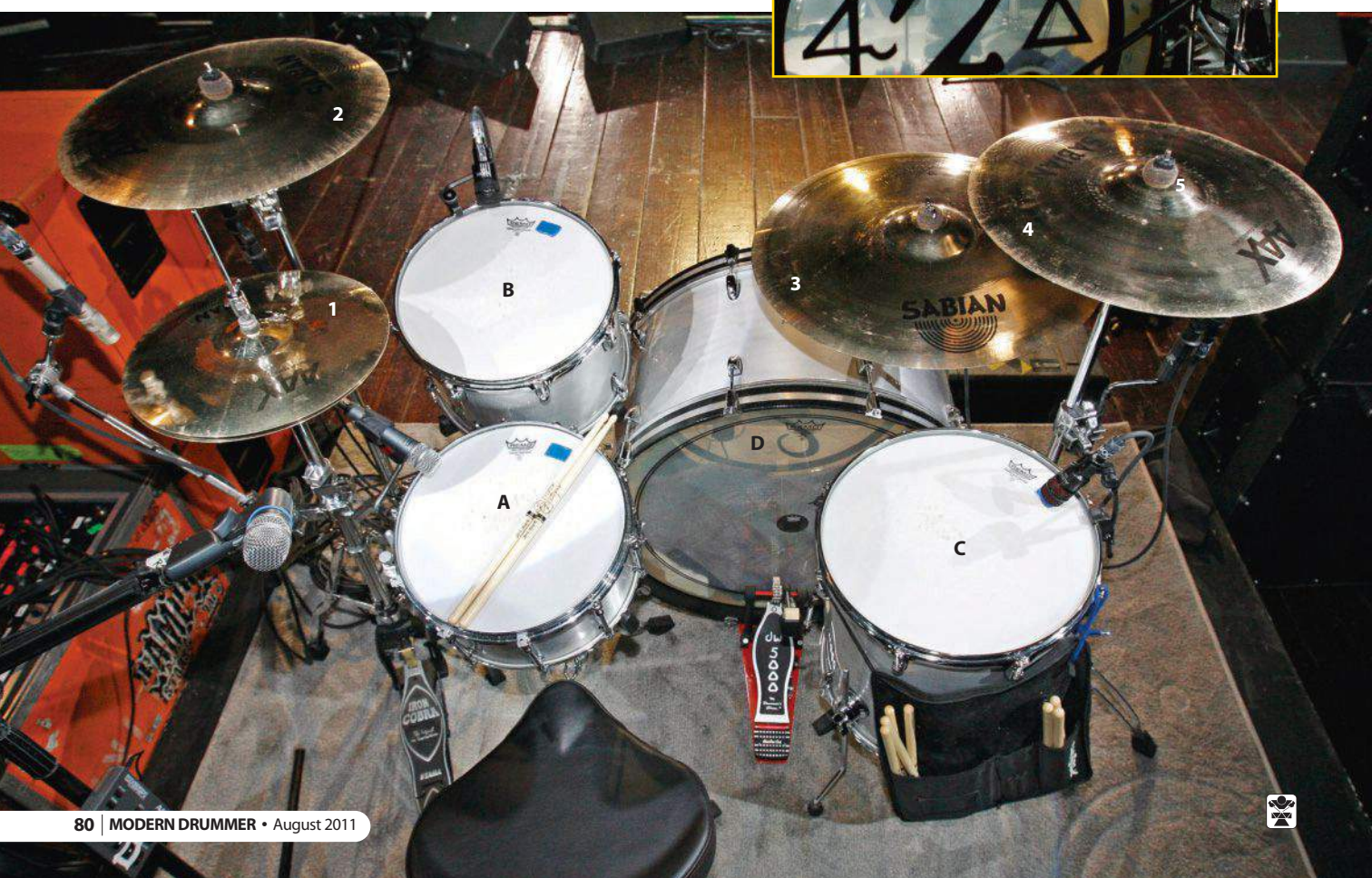
"I love the way the AAX series sounds. I like to crash on the cymbals quite a bit, including the ride. I wanted cymbals with a nice clean ping that aren't too dark. And they must be able to withstand a good bashing."

Sticks: Pro-Mark 5B hickory

Hardware: C&C custom-made ride cymbal holder, DW 5000 bass drum pedal, Tama Iron Cobra hi-hat stand

"My first kit was an old Gretsch, and it had the ride cymbal mounted on the kick drum. I always wanted to replicate that. All the metal is custom cut, and the drum is counterweighted so that it won't tip over. We did a bit of a dance to get that just right, but it turned out wonderfully. Now there's one less stand that I have to deal with."





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TAMA Starphonic Steel Snare Drum

Tama has augmented its acclaimed Starphonic snare line with a 6x14 model featuring a 1 mm steel shell finished with high-gloss black nickel plating. This drum is designed to offer a crisp, sharp, open sound with symphonic-level snare sensitivity.

Starphonic snares feature a solid triple-flange grooved hoop, Freedom quick-release lugs and claw hooks, and a linear-drive strainer system with a ratchet-style tension adjuster. List price: $615.

tama.com

ZOOM R8 Digital Recorder

The R8 is a compact digital multitrack recorder (eight-track playback and two-track simultaneous recording), audio interface, control surface, and pad sampler. Its built-in drum sounds can be triggered using eight pads and three bank keys to create loops. You can also use the unit's drum machine to create original backing beats or simply output a metronome for tempo control. The R8 comes with a 2GB SD card and supports up to 32GB SDHC cards.

samsontech.com

EVANS Hybrid-S Marching Snare Head

Inspired by the design of the award-winning Hybrid series, Evans' new Hybrid-S (Hybrid-Soft) marching snare batter features two unique fibers that deliver a soft and sensitive feel with a warm, full, rich sound and superior snare response.

evansdrumheads.com

PAISTE Alpha Swiss Crashes

The perforated 18" Alpha Thin Swiss crash is designed to be explosive, forceful, trashy, and mysterious sounding, with a fast and balanced decay. The 18" Alpha Medium Swiss crash is slightly heavier but responds very quickly and delivers a trashy effects sound with more overtones and body.

paiste.com

YAMAHA Recording Custom Heritage Drumset

To celebrate the forty-fifth anniversary of the first edition of the classic Recording Custom drumset, Yamaha is building forty-five kits to the original specifications in the most popular colors from the past, including mellow yellow, piano white, and hot red. The Japanese Hokkaido birch shells deliver a pre-EQ'ed sound that makes the drums perfect for the studio or for use with multiple microphones.
yamaha.com

CYMPAD Ride Cymbal Optimizer

New and improved Optimizer ride cymbal washers feature a higher density, firmer foam and an increased height to better support larger, heavier ride and crash cymbals. They come in a two-pack, with a list price of $5.
cympad.com

SKB Drum Soft Cases

SKB's new Drum Soft cases have a polyurethane inner wall that makes the sides more rigid and adds additional protection. The outside is wrapped with 600-denier nylon, while the padded interior is plush lined. Each case includes carrying handles and shoulder straps. Heavy-duty double zippers are included, and all cases have the size sewn on the side, which simplifies packing up after a gig.
skbcases.com

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PMBRM2 Small Broomsticks are shorter (14 1/2" long) and smaller in diameter (.800") than Pro-Mark's regular Broomsticks. This version produces a sound that falls between that of brushes and Hot Rods. List price: $32.95.

The Joey Jordison PW515W oak Autograph series drumstick is identical to the Slipknot drummer's popular hickory model (TX515W)—16" long and .551" in diameter, with a slim neck for fast rebound and a round wood tip for articulation. List price: $17.95.

Jordison's stick bag is made of black Cordura-type material. Two large inner pockets, a mesh inner pocket, and additional inner and outer pockets provide ample storage, and a sturdy handle and adjustable shoulder strap make for easy transport. List price: $47.95.

The SD6 is a maple stick, similar in design to Pro-Mark's SD9 but with a felt ball on the butt end. It's 16" long and .610" in diameter, with a relatively long taper and an oval wood tip. List price: $33.95.

The B400 brush features a black plastic handle with retractable blue nylon bristles that are slightly thinner in diameter for a softer touch and increased sensitivity. List price: $32.95.

promark.com

ALESIS DM10 Studio Kit With New Rack

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alesis.com

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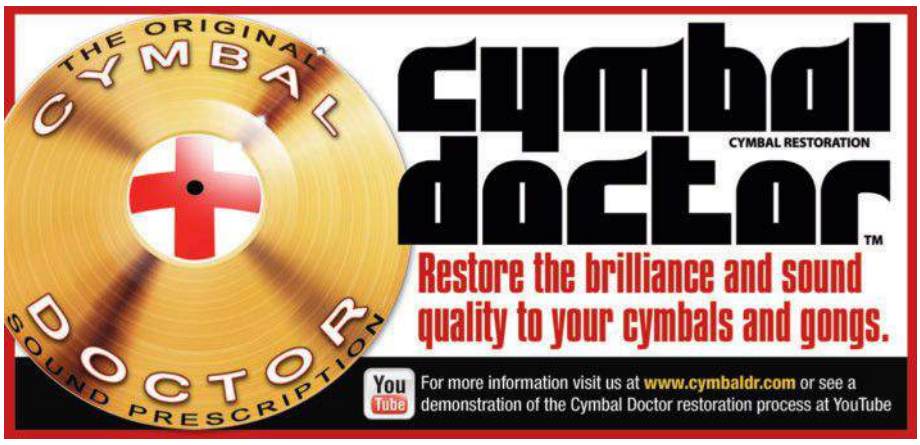
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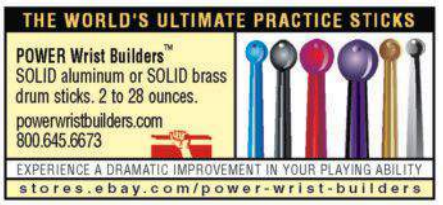
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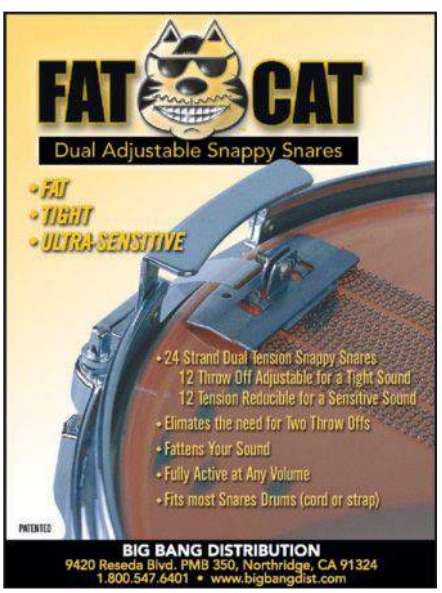
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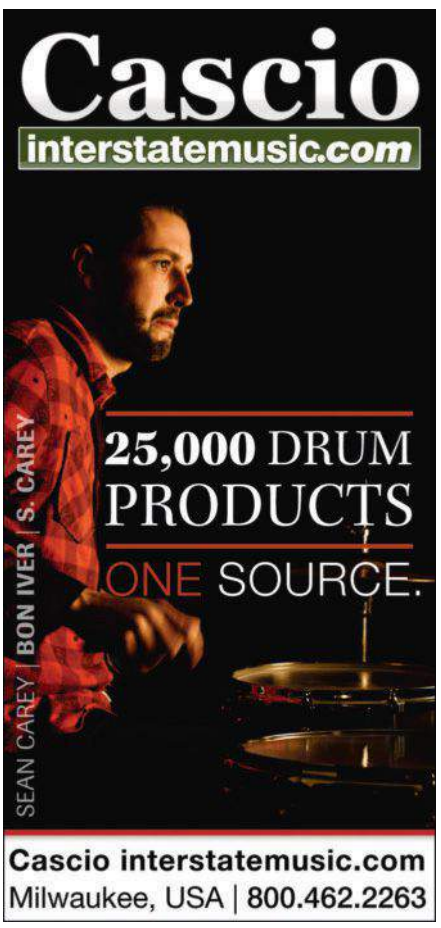
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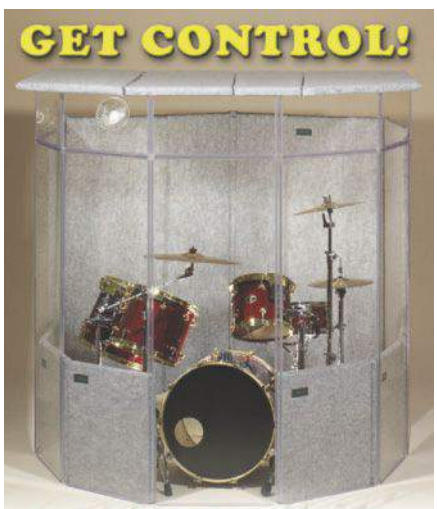
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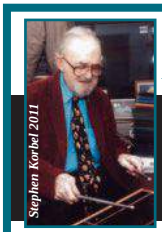

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WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT...?

Courtesy of John King/Zildjian

RUFUS "SPEEDY" JONES

Jazz icon **Duke Ellington**, referring to the drummer's "mysticalizationalist's paradiddled self-portrait tapestry," was merely one onlooker moved to poeticism when asked to describe the heavenly playing of Rufus "Speedy" Jones.

by Bruce Klauber

Back in the day, jazz drumming fans loved debating who had the quickest hands: Was it Gene Krupa, Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, Max Roach, Joe Morello—or even Barrett Deems, who was once billed as "The World's Fastest Drummer"?

A very good case could also be made for one of the most underappreciated players in the history of jazz, Rufus "Speedy" Jones. Beyond his lightning-fast technique, Jones provided a rhythmic spark that elevated the sound of several of the most legendary ensembles in jazz history, including those led by Maynard Ferguson, Lionel Hampton, Count Basie, and Duke Ellington.

FROM HAMPTON TO FERGUSON

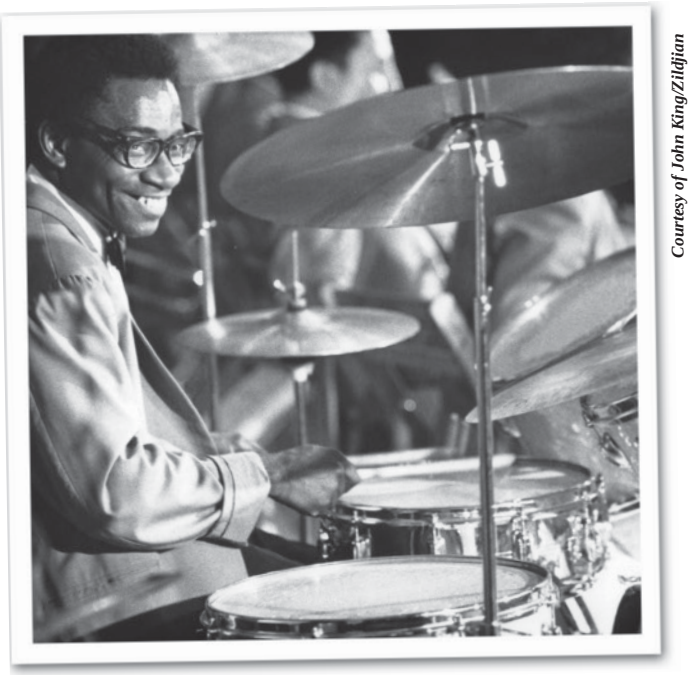
A native of Charleston, South Carolina, Jones started playing trumpet while in grammar school and then switched to drums at age thirteen. Five years later he was awarded a scholarship to attend Florida A&M University. Jones's formal studies didn't last long, though, as the drummer soon hit the road with Lionel Hampton's band. Jones first recorded with the ebullient vibraphone master in Germany in 1954. By 1958 Jones was a regular at New York City's rowdy jazz showplace the Metropole Cafe, where he often backed swing-era stalwarts such as Sol Yaged and Henry "Red" Allen and rubbed elbows with Metropole regulars like drummers Gene Krupa and Cozy Cole.

In 1959 Jones made a big breakthrough when he joined what was then the hottest and most popular band in the land, that of trumpeter Maynard Ferguson. Ferguson could blow higher and louder than any trumpet player in history, and his group—lean and mean at thirteen members—reflected the leader's preference for volume, speed, and high drama.

Jones's idiosyncratic technique and tone held Ferguson's ensemble together. His organic tuning made the drums an integral part of the band's sound—low and dark, almost like another member of the trombone section. Given the group's limited instrumentation, Jones actively used his drumming to fill in the gaps, so to speak. Some of the legendary charts played by the Ferguson band, like "Stella by Starlight" and "The Mark of

Jazz," required drum fills every few bars, and Jones provided the right amount of energy and activity, without disrupting the ensemble's momentum. Jones was a master of slow tempos as well, evidenced by his playing on Slide Hampton's famed "Frame for the Blues." Few could swing a band so well at this tempo.

Jones stayed in Ferguson's drum chair until 1963, when the fortunes of the band began to change. Onetime Count Basie drummer Butch Miles recalls seeing and hearing Jones during his tenure with Ferguson. "I was all of sixteen and marching with my high school band in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York," Miles says. "One night we had a fairly late curfew, so I organized a trip for six of us to head up to Birdland, where Buddy Rich and his sextet were performing with Maynard Ferguson's big band. I really had gone only to hear Buddy and didn't know much about Maynard, but I'm glad I stayed. What Rufus Jones played that night almost made me quit. Speed, speed, and more speed, and all of it done with great ease. I never saw a roll played that high off the snare. His hands went over his head. Unbelievable! And *swinging*."



Courtesy of John King/Zildjian

Jones led his own small group in 1963 and 1964, when he recorded his only opus as a leader, *Five on Eight*, for the Cameo Parkway label. Ferguson was recording for Cameo at this time, so he may have helped Jones get the date.

DRUMMING FOR THE DUKE

Jones marked time in 1965 as a member of the Apollo Theater house band before making a brief return to Lionel Hampton's group. Then, in 1966, he joined Duke Ellington's famous jazz orchestra. When Jones took over the coveted drum chair from Sam Woodyard, he switched to the double bass setup that Ellington required of all his drummers since Louie Bellson's arrival in 1951.

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him, Jones got his share of crowd-pleasing solo showcases with Duke. Via Hudson Music's *Classic Drum Solos* DVDs, we get an accurate idea of just how speedy Rufus was. Though he didn't exploit the two bass drums as much as Bellson did, his single-stroke and paradiddle stickings were formidable, and his speed, dexterity, and ability to move effortlessly around the kit were mesmerizing. "Rufus has been given big solo spots," Ellington put it at the time, "and his explosive rhythms and animation come off in very convincing, symbolic patterns. His horizontal movements—straightforward and circular—from cymbal to cymbal, along with his eyes and eyeglasses, play a part in his mysticalizationalist's paradiddled self-portrait tapestry."

Jones stayed with Ellington until 1973, with his most memorable contribution being his appearance on the recording of the large-scale piece *Far East Suite*. The drummer brought a cleaner and more pointed sound to the band than his predecessor, Woodyard, did. Knowing that there were no drum charts and that this was Jones's first recording with Ellington makes the performance on the challenging piece that much more remarkable. Though Duke hardly ever performed any of the suite's pieces in concert, one title, "Isfahan," went on to become a jazz standard.

Jones also played on a number of Ellington's best latter-day recordings, including *70th Birthday Concert*, *New Orleans Suite*, and the small-group effort *The Pianist*. The latter is an important release in that it shows how sensitively the drummer could play when the situation called for it.

WHAT SHOULD'VE BEEN

Jones's post-Ellington life couldn't have been a happy one. Reports are that Rufus suffered from crippling arthritis and had to leave the band in the summer of 1973, finding it physically impossible to play. He was replaced by Rocky White, who's generally referred to as the last drummer that Duke personally hired. Ellington died on May 24, 1974.

In 1989, Jones's mentally challenged son, Lebrew, was wrongfully convicted of a murder that took place on a construction site where he worked. In November of 2009, after Lebrew had served twenty years in prison, the conviction was overturned. Sadly, Rufus, who passed away on April 25, 1990, didn't live to see his son set free and spent his final years—according to various sources—working as a porter and a men's-room attendant at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas.

It's a shame that Rufus "Speedy" Jones was unable to spend his later days sharing his vast musical knowledge through teaching, lecturing, and writing. Yet it's clear that in his prime he was one of the most flexible, sensitive, and swinging drummers on the scene. The Slingerland double bass setup that Jones used with Ellington is currently on display at Steve Maxwell Vintage and Custom Drums in New York City, a reminder of the high regard this drummer continues to be held in by drum enthusiasts and jazz fans throughout the world.

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Classical Roots, Part 2

IGOR STRAVINSKY AND BÉLA BARTÓK

The Industrial Revolution led to a percussive revolution in turn-of-the-century classical music. This month we examine two composers whose barrier-crashing approaches could make players rejoice—and make audiences riot. by Elizabeth Walsh

Although rhythm has always been essential to classical music, percussion instruments have not. For centuries, percussionists were stuck playing the occasional cymbal crash or, if they were lucky, something on the timpani. So what changed? How did percussion come to take a greater role in classical music?

Thank the Industrial Revolution. Besides factories, steam engines, and pollution, the era also brought Europe, for the first time in its history, a middle class. This new demographic had some leisure time and a little money to spend. And the people wanted entertainment.

With larger concert-going audiences, composers now found that they had to get louder. Orchestras grew in size. Many instruments, from pianos to violins, were redesigned during the nineteenth century to project sound more effectively, and they were no longer easily overwhelmed by percussion.

The new audiences also liked spectacle. In a distant foreshadowing of modern-day pyrotechnics, Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture" (written in 1880) actually features live cannon shots. Also, thanks to more convenient methods of travel—along with World's Fairs and recording innovations—the music of other cultures was accessible to many Europeans for the first time. Composers heard and were influenced by jazz, Indonesian gamelan, and folk dances.

As the twentieth century began, percussion instruments gradually became less of a novelty and more of an integral part of the classical music vocabulary. Some of the better-known players during these early years include the timpanist Alfred P. Friese; William F. Ludwig, cofounder of Ludwig Drums; and George Lawrence Stone, who's well known as the author of the classic drum instruction book *Stick Control*.

One milestone in the development of percussion as a major part of the orchestra is *The Rite of Spring* by Igor Stravinsky, which debuted in Paris in 1913. For Stravinsky (1882–1971), rhythm was a major compositional building block. Rather than constructing a piece in the traditional way, by creating and then developing a melody, he wrote short, contrasting sections of music and then juxtaposed them.

The Rite of Spring is a ballet meant to depict a pagan ritual. As befits a dance piece, rhythm is of major importance. Stravinsky gives the percussion section a prominent role and, by using melodic repetition, relegates "melody" instruments, like strings, to rhythm duty. The score calls for at least five timpani, bass drum, tam-tam (an instrument similar to a gong), crotales (antique cymbals), tambourine, triangle, and guiro.

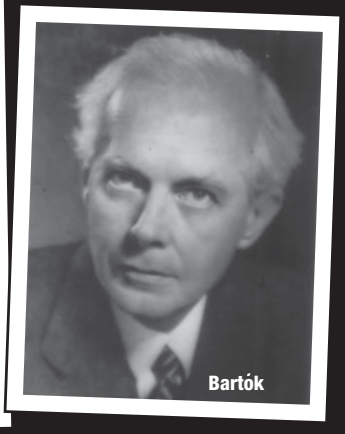
This was a landmark piece of music, and a shocking one as well. No other classical composer was featuring percussion to such an extent, and the rhythm changes were so complex that choreographer Vaslav Nijinsky had a hard time keeping up with them. At the Paris premiere, a riot actually broke out during the performance; audiences were simply not used to this strange music.

Béla Bartók (1881–1945) also prominently featured unusual rhythms and percussion in his work. The Hungarian composer devoted a lot of time to recording and transcribing the folk music of his country. Much of this music, which is often based on irregular time signatures, found its way into his works. His one-act opera *Bluebeard's Castle* (1911) is an example of this.

But Bartók's use of percussion really reached its peak with two pieces: Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta (1936), which incorporated timpani, xylophone, bass drum, side (snare) drum, cymbals, and tam-tam, and the Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion (1937). These pieces don't rely on the primal mood of *The Rite of Spring* or the folk rhythms of Bartók's earlier work; they use more complex rhythmic structures that test the abilities of the performers.

Bartók himself was not sure that the sonata would be playable, and there was actually a conductor at the 1938 premiere, which was highly unusual in a piece for only four players. The two percussionists in this piece played a total of seven instruments: timpani, bass drum, side drum, xylophone, tam-tam, cymbals, and triangle.

Stravinsky


Bartók

Both Stravinsky and Bartók were also influenced by jazz and wrote pieces for jazz ensemble. Bartók wrote *Contrasts* for the Hungarian violinist Joseph Szigeti, the composer himself on piano, and Benny Goodman on clarinet. Stravinsky in turn wrote the *Ebony Concerto* for Woody Herman and his Thundering Herd.

So the Industrial Revolution led to a percussive revolution of sorts, changing the way that the classical music establishment looked at percussion instruments. It was now accepted that they could play a major part in a piece of music, if not actually dominate it.

LET'S BE FRANK:
IT USUALLY COMES BACK TO ZAPPA

In part one of our Classical Roots series (May 2011), we mentioned how Frank Zappa often spoke of the influence that composer Edgard Varèse had on him as a budding composer. Given Zappa's fondness for the classical avant-garde, it should come as no surprise that the sonic revolutionary also found a way to give sincere yet humorous props to Igor Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* on his 1988 album *Guitar*. Zappa's "In-a-Gadda-Stravinsky" combines ideas from the innovative ballet with the infamously sludgy riff-rock hit "In-a-Gadda-da-Vida" and the military memorial tune "Taps."

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TAKING THE REINS

This month *MD* regular **Ilya Stemkovsky** hips us to some of the best drummer-led releases to recently come down the pike—and we check out two popular players' latest educational offerings.

●●●●●

STEVE GADD & FRIENDS *LIVE AT VOCE*

At this point in the game, Steve Gadd can take his time. Whether he's working soul covers or jazz standards, every brushstroke or thick floor tom backbeat feels deliberate and right—like the sage is now showing you how it's *really* done. But before you start thinking you have that bag, prepare to be floored (yet again) by those famous doubles on "Way Back Home," this time broken up as hi-hat and bass drum notes and snare rimclicks. After soaking in this 2009 live recording of undeniable swing, fatback grooves, and plenty of solos with a crack band, we ask: Where's the box set? (drstevegadd.com)

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HIGHTIME FEATURING NDUGU CHANCLER
MORNING WALK

Ndugu Chancler's penchant for playing the simplest, funkiest part is well documented in pop music, so it's a treat to hear the drummer let loose a bit on this collection of light fusion and jazzy R&B. He's still all pocket; those looking for Cobham-style soloing won't find that here. Regardless, that syncopated snare placement on the "e" of 3 on the title track is the work of a professional with an abundance of beats at his disposal. By the time Chancler whips out the ruff-laden boogaloo groove on "Don't Ask," you'll be smiling and snapping your fingers. (summitrecords.com)

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GERALD CLEAVER'S UNCLE JUNE
BE IT AS I SEE IT

The cliché "not a drummer's record" certainly applies to Gerald Cleaver's newest outing, a challenging but visceral collection of tone poems, expressive cymbal work, and boundary-pushing avant-jazz. "Statues/UmbRa" falls into more temporal territory, anchored by an understated ride pulse, but soon deconstructs into a swirling mass of distortion. Conversely, the gentle "Alluvia" is all wide-open bass drum and decrescendo fills approximating delay. Later, the drummer bobs and weaves around the staccato figures in "Gremmy," filling the space with just enough light and shade and never distracting from the compositions. Whoever said the drumset isn't an emotional instrument clearly spoke too soon. (freshsoundrecords.com)

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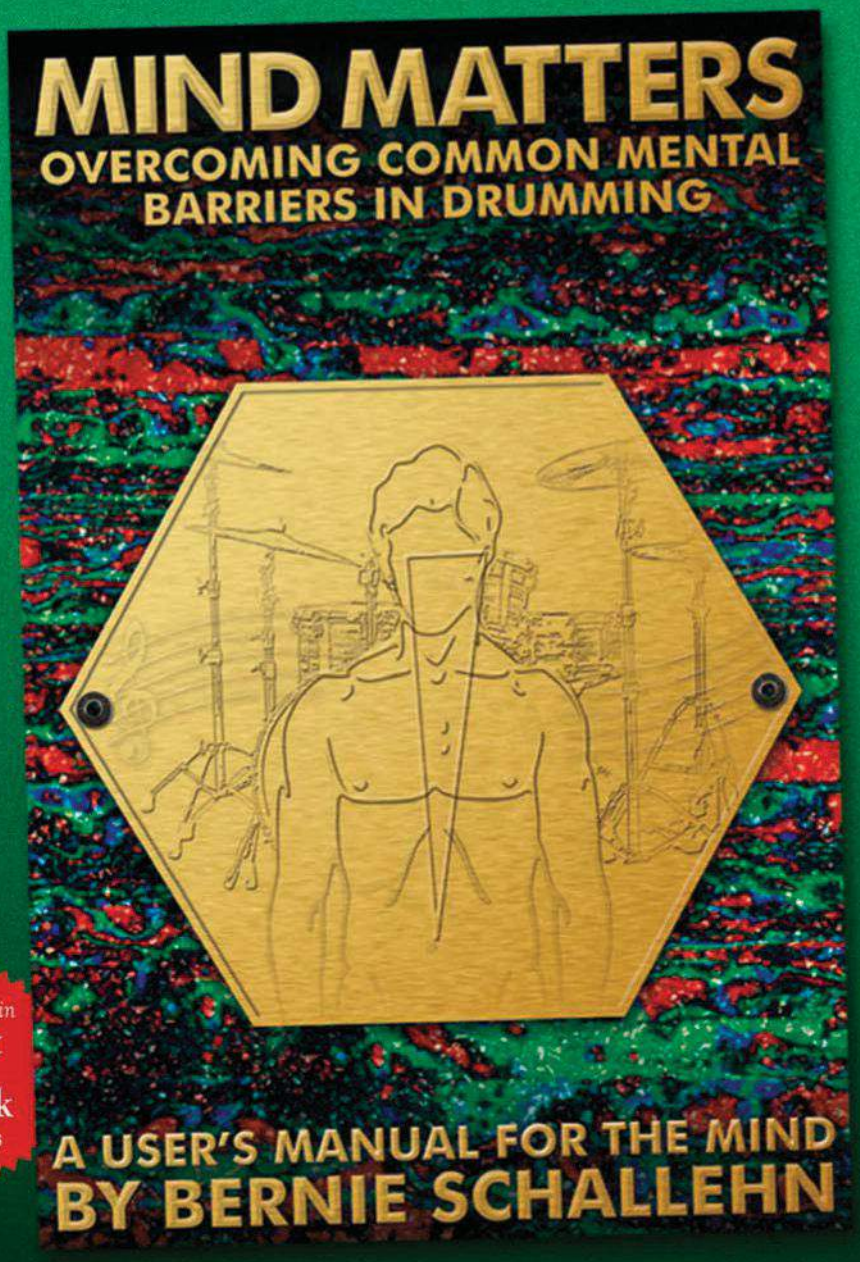
DENNY SEIWELL TRIO
RECKLESS ABANDON

Seiwell, perhaps best known as the original drummer in Paul McCartney's Wings, has his jazz chops in focus on this lively guitar/organ/drums session. Besides the requisite feel-good swing on several tracks, Seiwell engages in some popping funk ("Big Bop") and energetic, tom-heavy samba rhythms ("Coming Up"). Years of playing in non-jazz situations as a studio pro have not dulled the drummer's touch, as the brushwork and soloing are both authentic and musical. Check out Seiwell's laid-back bounce on the oft-recorded "Cantaloupe Island" and the spry waltz feel of "United," featuring tasty hi-hat/snare interplay. (dennyseiwell.com)

●●●●●

JEFF "TAIN" WATTS
FAMILY

Jeff "Tain" Watts' reputation as a jazz powerhouse is justified by thirty years of legendary recordings, but on *Family*, his seventh album as a leader, the drummer also shows a natural softness across a set of his own excellent compositions. Steve Wilson's alto/soprano sax lends the music a yearning quality, with the vibe buoyed by Watts' super-sensitive cymbal touch and keen timekeeping. Of course, there are also fireworks aplenty. The staccato tom jabs during "Of August Moon" stretch the music like a rubber band, and Tain's ghosted triplets and rumbling fills on the equally elastic "Jonesin' (for Elvin)" are pure magic. (darkkeymusic.com)



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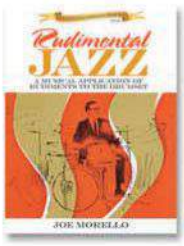

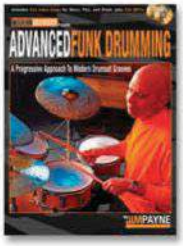

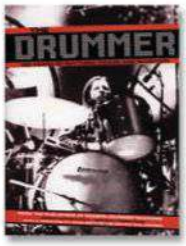

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RALPH PETERSON'S UNITY PROJECT *OUTER REACHES*

Always the swinger, Ralph Peterson and his Unity Project feature originals and nods to Woody Shaw and Larry Young on *Outer Reaches*. The drummer bursts out of the gate on "The Moontrane," charging hard and leaning into his ride. The tempo (and pulse) quickens for "Beyond All Limits," with a Peterson solo full of changing cymbal colors and kick drum/hi-hat punctuations. Later, "Zoltan" switches from a slick snare march intro to a lilting beat in seven to a fierce 4/4 swing faster than you can blink. Paying tribute to his heroes while still pushing, Peterson remains a drummer to watch. (ralphpetersonmusic.com)

MORE DRUMMER-LED RELEASES

Showcasing formidable chops, a deep understanding of Latin rhythms, and a jazzer's ear, Puerto Rican–born drummer **NOMAR NEGRONI**, along with his pianist father, throws all that and the kitchen sink into the Negroni's Trio's *Just Three*. Negroni rides rims, swings hard, and solos with a maturity beyond his thirty years. (negronistrio.com)

Drummer **BROOKE SOFFERMAN**, under the Brooke Sofferman Perspective moniker, delivers *Symposium*, a raw double live CD of fearless, satisfying modern jazz. "Sookie" glides along on mallets, with Sofferman constantly switching up beats and accents, winking at his musicians. Ingredients: inspiration and just a couple beads of sweat. (soffermanperspective.com)

AMbean, a synth-heavy, electronica-drenched album from drummer **DON PERETZ**, mixes traditional fusion with ambient textures to yield eye-opening results. Guitarist Oz Noy lends the music some rock-infused weight, but it's Peretz's organic fluidity around the kit and wild metric modulation that consistently impress. (donperetz.com)

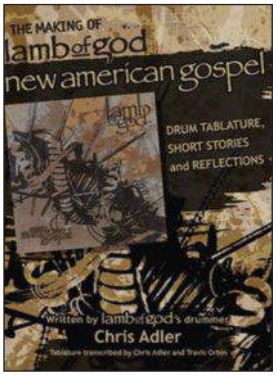
Philadelphia-based drummer **JOE TRUGLIO** plays with taste and a highly developed touch on *Past Life*, a keyboard-trio set of his original compositions. On display are Truglio's ease with odd times ("Peace Walk") and ability to play at lower dynamic levels ("Dream Space"). (joetruglio.com)

Plat Principal: Octopus, an extremely advanced forty-minute ostinato-based solo drum track by German drummer **MARKUS CZENIA**, features stellar independence and risk taking (dig those alternating tom doubles at the 28-minute mark). Its main characteristic, though, is just how musical the whole thing is. (markus-czenia.de)

Funky R&B, smooth grooves, and blazing kit work share equal billing on **JAMAL BATISTE**'s newest, *The Unorthodox Drummer: Just Jamal*. The music is heavily produced, with Batiste occasionally playing off overdubbed handclaps, but there's still room for super gospel chops ("The Challenge") and a percussion duet with Bill Summers ("Drum Talk"). (theunorthodoxdrummer.com)

DRUM SMARTS

Lamb of God's rhythmic wonder and **Chicago**'s drumming icon share the knowledge.



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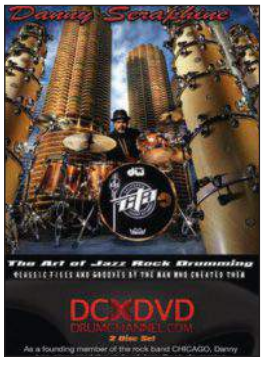
CHRIS ADLER

THE MAKING OF NEW AMERICAN GOSPEL: DRUM TABLATURE, SHORT STORIES, AND REFLECTIONS

BOOK LEVEL: ALL $24.99

Much like his DIY approach to playing drums and building a career with his band Lamb of God, award-winning drummer Chris Adler is carving his own path as author, publisher, and transcriber (with the help of up-and-coming metal drummer Travis Orbin) with his first book, *The Making of New American Gospel*. The book contains detailed drum charts for each tune from LOG's debut album, plus introductory essays from Adler that cover everything from the band's beginnings to the writing process for *New American Gospel* to the challenges of having to record, mix, and master an entire record in just seven days. Adler's tone is friendly, open, and honest, making for a revealing glimpse at the inner workings of one of metal's most powerful and sometimes most tumultuous bands. (Adler Publishing) **Michael Dawson**



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DANNY SERAPHINE

THE ART OF JAZZ ROCK DRUMMING

DVD (2) LEVEL: ALL $24.95

Danny Seraphine, one of the founding fathers of the jazz-rock genre, is back with a vengeance, releasing an autobiography (see the Critique in last month's *MD*) and the DVD *The Art of Jazz Rock Drumming*. Encompassing his long career with the pop giants Chicago and, more recently, his band California Transit Authority, Seraphine captures all the elements that have made him a drumming trailblazer. From a historical and instructional perspective, songs like "Introduction," "I'm a Man," and the classic "25 or 6 to 4" are analyzed with an easy-to-understand, conversational approach. Bonus features include an interview and drum jam with Terry Bozzio, a "Make Me Smile" fill tutorial with Gregg Bissonette, and a downloadable workbook. (Drum Channel) **Bob Girouard**

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In Memoriam

Woodrow "Sonship" Theus

by Gerry Gibbs

Woodrow "Sonship" Theus, whose credits include work with McCoy Tyner, Charles Lloyd, John McLaughlin, Woody Shaw, Freddie Hubbard, Michal Urbaniak, and Pharoah Sanders, passed away this past March 18, at age fifty-eight. Among the pallbearers at his funeral were the world-renowned drummers Ndugu Chancler and James Gadson.

Theus took on the name Sonship upon hearing John Coltrane's classic *Sun Ship* album at sixteen years old. He made the adjustment in spelling in order to honor Jesus, the Son of God.

Theus was born in Los Angeles on the first day of summer in 1952. By the time he was twelve, he had played the flute, violin, trumpet, and piano before deciding that the drums were his true calling. At sixteen Sonship recorded an album and began a long-running house gig at an L.A. jazz club with pianist Larry Nash, a schoolmate. While still in school, Theus began getting calls to play with jazz artists like saxophonist John Klemmer. Another sax great, Charles Lloyd, called Theus's mother and told her that as soon as the young drummer graduated, he wanted to take him on the road. Sure enough, once Sonship was done with school, he joined Lloyd, playing with him on and off for eleven years.

Among the qualities that made Theus unique was his unrelenting energy. He insisted that his intensity and volume—a classic image shows him stretching to play his high-mounted China cymbals—had nothing to do with insensitivity or an attempt to overwhelm the music. Rather, he made a literal connection between his aggressive approach and Psalm 150 of the Bible, which states that God likes to be praised with "high-sounding cymbals."

Sonship Theus was recording professionally before graduating high school. *The Beginning* is an album he made with his remarkably advanced teen band Jazz Symphonics, which also featured future piano star Larry Nash.

Theus was also known for his unique drumkits. One set featured a three-dimensional replica of the solar system hanging from each drum, while another had fishnet and fake fish dangling from it—both paying homage to God's creation of the world. Sonship also gravitated toward unusual sounds. I remember seeing him once with four large rack toms, all tuned similarly low and timpani-like. At another point he used a stand-up set without a seat, which can be seen in the liner notes to trumpeter Eddie Henderson's *Heritage* album. And as far back as high school, he was known to paint his cymbals various hues. Regardless of the colors, sizes, or configurations of his drums, Sonship always had a very open, tribal-like tone.

Befitting his unusual approach to sound and technique, Theus was known to carry himself through life in idiosyncratic ways. One bandleader asked him several times to play more softly because he couldn't hear himself. At the end of the set Sonship told the leader, "I will go outside and ask God what He thinks." When he returned to the stage playing as loudly as ever, the drummer explained, "I asked God whether I should play quieter…and He said no."

Though this sounds like the behavior of an irrational or self-centered person, people close to Sonship knew him as an intelligent, sensitive, giving, sane musician—albeit one whose priority was always to glorify Jesus and hopefully take musicians to the next level. On one occasion, Sonship felt so strongly about being unable to lessen his intensity that rather than play a less inspired drum solo, he instead chose to recite poetry—which, unsurprisingly, glorified God.

Theus can be heard on the recordings of many jazz greats, including influential releases by Eddie Henderson, Michal Urbaniak, and Bobby Hutcherson.

Theus did eventually alter his relentless approach, explaining that he'd begun employing more dynamics and playing in a more compromising fashion. It wasn't about him anymore, he said, but rather about helping whatever band he was in achieve a group sound.

Since the early 1980s, Sonship had battled kidney problems and spent a good amount of time on dialysis, though he continued performing and recording long after most others would have given up. Eventually he succumbed to his health issues, but not before leaving an indelible mark on every musician he played with and befriended.

***Gerry Gibbs** leads his own highly regarded groups and has played with McCoy Tyner, Alice Coltrane, Larry Coryell, and Stanley Clarke, among other jazz artists.*

Armen Halburian

Drummer and percussionist Armen Halburian passed away this past March 16, at age seventy-seven. Halburian, who was a member of Herbie Mann's Family of Mann and played on albums by Dave Liebman, Larry Young, and Leonard Cohen, among many other jazz, pop, world, and avant-garde releases, was one of the first drummers to bring ethnic percussion to New York City's studio scene in its golden age of the '60s and '70s.

When Halburian was young, his jazz-loving sister brought him to live performances in New York City, and he became enchanted by the drums. He was also influenced heavily by the music of his Armenian ancestors. "My father, who had escaped from Turkey, played records from the Middle East, so I heard a lot of doumbek playing and tambourine playing," Halburian told *Modern Drummer* in 2010. "It's part of my soul." The drummer studied with Sam Ulano and Joe Morello, and when Morello left pianist Marian McPartland's band, Halburian stepped in. He eventually became involved with the influential New York City loft scene.

In his later years, Halburian played a regular percussion gig at the Chapala Grill in Bergenfield, New Jersey, with Cactus Salad, a nine-piece Latin jazz band led by drummer Russ "Styles" DiBona. His custom setup reflected his worldly approach and flair for invention. Over the years Halburian designed a number of products, including a bell tree and the versatile Sta-Set drum key, which was bought by Ludwig in 1979.

"Learn how to play the *conversation*," Halburian said in *MD*. "That's one of the benefits of being a musician—experiencing that communication. That's what our lives are about: being in tune with your spirit and the world around you. 'Be here now' explains it simply. Being a musician, you know that's part of your life. It helps you to tune in, so you can then play to your potential."

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Sam Ash Metal Masters Clinic

This past April 21 at Sam Ash in Cerritos, California, a Metal Masters performance clinic was held, featuring drummers **Charlie Benante** (Anthrax) and **Mike Portnoy** (Dream Theater/Avenged Sevenfold) and bassists Frank Bello (Anthrax) and David Ellefson (Megadeth), sharing the stage for the first time before more than 400 fans. After each musician spoke and played solo, the players paired up and then jammed together as a quartet. The slamming finale featured songs by Anthrax and Megadeth, plus a medley of classic rock and metal covers. Event sponsors included Tama, Evans, Remo, Paiste, Samson, Hartke, Zoom, and Vic Firth. **Photos by Alex Solca**

Portnoy

Portnoy, Ellefson, Bello, and Benante

Benante

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KIT OF THE MONTH

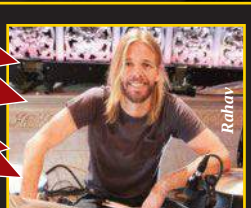
The Urban Assassin

This setup, from John Bishop of Albuquerque, New Mexico, was designed to reflect the patriotism shared by its owner and his family. "My father, my grandmother, and both of my grandfathers served in and retired from the armed forces," Bishop says. "They instilled in my brother and me the founding principles of this country and a love of the military and all it represents, and I had to put that into a kit. I wanted to represent the pride of the American military and make a statement on stage backing up a metal band. I think I accomplished both."

The kit, which Bishop has dubbed the Urban Assassin, is a Tama Granstar II with Zildjian Z Custom cymbals, and it mixes catalog drums with custom items. "I recut the bearing edges for a more pronounced attack," Bishop explains. "I applied the finish myself by using genuine military-grade urban camouflage, and I used a heat-seal technique to apply it. The kit took me almost five years to complete and was well worth every minute!"

Photo Submission: Hi-res digital photos, along with descriptive text, may be emailed to billya@moderndrummer.com. Show "Kit of the Month" in the subject line of the message.

COMING UP IN MODERN DRUMMER



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